

CLARISSA.

OR, THE HISTORY OF A YOUNG LADY:

Comprehending

The most Important Concerns of Private LIFE;

And particularly shewing,

The DISTRESSES that may attend the Misconduct

Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,

In Relation to MARRIAGE.

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THE
HISTORY
OF
MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER I.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

Upper-Flask, Hamstead, Friday (June 9) morn. 7 o'clock.

I AM now here, and here have been this hour and half. What an industrious spirit have I! Nobody can say, that I eat the bread of idleness. I take true pains for all the pleasure I enjoy. I cannot choose but to admire myself strangely; for, certainly, with this active soul, I should have made a very great figure in whatever station I had filled. But had I been a prince! — To be sure I should have made a most *noble* prince! I should have led up a military dance equal to that of the great Macedonian. I should have added kingdom to kingdom, and robbed all my neighbour-sovereigns, in order to have obtained the name of *Robert the Great*. And I would have gone to war with the Great Turk, and the

Persian, and the Mogholl, for their Seraglios ; for not one of those Eastern Monarchs should have had a pretty woman to bless himself with, till I had done with her.

And now I have so much leisure upon my hands, that, after having informed myself of all necessary particulars, I am set to my short-hand writing, in order to keep up with time as well as I can : For the subject is now become worthy of me ; and it is yet too soon, I doubt, to pay my compliments to my charmer, after all her fatigues for two or three days past : And, moreover, I have abundance of matters preparative to my future proceedings, to recount, in order to connect, and render all intelligible.

I parted with the captain at the foot of the hill, trebly instructed ; that is to say, as to the *Fact*, to the *Probable*, and to the *Possible*. If my beloved and I can meet and make up, without the mediation of this worthy gentleman, it will be so much the better. As little foreign aid, as possible, in my amorous conflicts, has always been a rule with me ; tho' here I have been obliged to call in so much. And who knows but it may be the better for her, the less she makes necessary ? I cannot bear, that she should sit so indifferent to me, as to be in earnest to part with me for ever, upon so *flight*, or even upon *any* occasion. *If I find she is*—But no more threatenings till she is in my power—Thou knowest what I have vowed.

All Will's account, from the lady's flight to his finding her again, all the accounts of the people of the house, the coachman's information to Will, and so forth, collected together, stand thus.

‘ The Hamstead coach, when the lady came to it,
‘ had but two passengers in it. But she made the
‘ fellow go off directly, paying for the vacant places.

‘ The two passengers directing the coachman to set
‘ them down at the Upper-Flask, she bid him set her
‘ down there also.

‘ They took leave of her (very respectfully no doubt), and she went into the house, and asked, If she could not have a dish of tea, and a room to herself for half an hour ?

‘ They shewed her up to the very room where I now am. She sat at the very table I now write upon ; and, I believe, the chair I sit in was hers.’ O Belford, if thou knowest what Love is, thou wilt be able to account for these *minutiae*.

‘ She seemed spiritless and fatigued. The gentlewoman herself chose to attend so genteel and lovely a guest. She asked her, If she would have bread and butter to her tea? No. She could not eat. They had very good biscuits. As she pleased. The gentlewoman stepped out for some ; and returning on a sudden, she observed the sweet fugitive endeavouring to restrain a violent burst of grief, which she had given way to, in that little interval.

‘ However, when the tea came, she made her sit down with her, and asked her abundance of questions about the villages and roads in that neighbourhood.

‘ The gentlewoman took notice to her, *that she seemed to be troubled in mind*.

‘ Tender Spirits, she replied, could not part with dear friends without concern.’ She meant me, no doubt.

‘ She made no inquiry about a lodging, tho’ by the sequel, thou’lt observe, that she seemed to intend to go no farther than Hamstead. But after she had drank two dishes, and put a Biscake in her pocket—[Sweet soul, to serve for her supper perhaps—] she laid down half-a-crown ; and refusing change, sighing, took leave, saying, she would proceed towards Hendon ; the distance to which had been one of her questions.

‘ They offered to send to know, if a Hamstead coach were not to go to Hendon that evening. No

‘ matter, she said—Perhaps she might meet the chariot.’ Another of her *feints*, I suppose; for how, or with whom, could any thing of this sort have been concerted since yesterday morning?

‘ She had, as the people took notice to one another, something so uncommonly noble in her air, and in her person and behaviour, that they were sure she was of quality. And having no servant with her of either sex, her eyes [her fine eyes, the gentlewoman called them, stranger as she was, and a woman!] being swelled and red, they were sure there was an elopement in the case, either from parents or guardians; for they supposed her too young and too maidenly to be a married lady: And were she married, no husband would let such a fine young creature be unattended and alone; nor give her cause for so much grief, as seemed to be settled in her countenance. Then, at times, she seemed to be so bewildred, they said, that they were afraid she had it in her head to make away with herself.

‘ All these things put together, excited their curiosity; and they engaged a *peery* servant, as they called a footman who was drinking with Kit the hostler at the tap-house, to watch all her motions. This fellow reported the following particulars, as they were re-reported to me.

‘ She indeed went towards Hendon, passing by the sign of the Castle on the heath; then, stopping, looked about her, and down into the valley before her. Then, turning her face towards London, she seemed, by the motion of her handkerchief to her eyes, to weep; repenting (who knows?) the rash step she had taken, and wishing herself back again—

Better for her, if she do, Jack, once more I say! —Woe be to the girl who could think of marrying me,

Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

5

me, yet be able to run away from me, and renounce me for ever !

‘ Then, continuing on a few paces, she stopt again ; and, as if disliking her road, again seeming to weep, directed her course back towards Hamstead.’

I am glad she wept so much, because no heart bursts (be the occasion for the sorrow what it will) which has that kindly relief. Hence I hardly ever am moved at the sight of these pellucid fugitives in a fine woman. How often, in the past twelve hours, have I wished, that I could cry most confoundedly !

‘ She then saw a coach and four driving towards her empty. She crossed the path she was in, as if to meet it ; and seemed to intend to speak to the coachman, had he stopt, or spoke first. He, as earnestly, looked at her. Every one did so, who passed her (so the man who dogg'd her was the less suspected)—Happy rogue of a coachman, hadst thou known whose notice thou didst engage, and whom thou mightest have obliged !—It was the divine Clarissa Harlowe at whom thou gazedst !—My own Clarissa Harlowe !—But it was well for me that thou wert as undistinguishing as the beasts thou drovest ; otherwise, what a wild-goose chace had I been led ?

‘ The lady, as well as the coachman, in short, seemed to want resolution ; the horses kept on ; the fellow’s head and eyes, no doubt, turned behind him ; and the distance soon lengthened beyond recall. With a wistful eye she looked after him ; sighed and wept again ; as the servant, who then flily passed her, observed.

‘ By this time she had reached the houses. She looked up at every one, as she passed ; now-and-then breathing upon her bared hand, and applying it to her swelled eyes, to abate the redness, and dry the tears. At last, seeing a bill up for letting lodgings, she walked backwards and forwards half a dozen

' times, as if unable to determine what to do. And
 ' then went farther into the town ; and there the
 ' fellow being spoken to by one of his familiars, he lost
 ' her for a few minutes : But soon saw her come out
 ' of a linen-drapery shop, attended with a servant-
 ' maid, having, as he believed, bought some little
 ' matters, and, as it proved, got that maid-servant
 ' to go with her to the house she is now at (a).

' The fellow, after waiting about an hour, and
 ' not seeing her come out, returned, concluding
 ' that she had taken lodgings there.'

And here, supposing my narrative of the dramatic kind, ends Act the First. And now begins,

A C T II.

SCENE, Hamstead Heath continued.

Enter my Rascal.

WILL. having got at all these particulars, by exchanging others as frankly against them, which I had formerly prepared him with, both verbally and in writing ; I found the people already of my party, and full of good wishes for my success, repeating to me all they told him.

But he had first acquainted me with the accounts he had given them of his lady and me. It is necessary that I give thee the particulars of his tale—And I have a little time upon my hands ; for the maid of the house, who had been out of an errand, tells us, that she saw Mrs. Moore (with whom must be my first business) go into the house of a young gentleman, within a few doors of her, who has a maiden sister, Miss Rawlins by name, so notify'd for prudence, that none of her acquaintance undertake any thing of consequence, without consulting her.

Mean while my honest coachman is walking about Miss Rawlins's door, in order to bring me notice of Mrs. Moore's return to her own house. I hope her gossips-

(a) See Vol. iv. p. 353.

gossip's-tale will be as soon told as mine. Which take as follows.

Will told them, before I came, ‘ That his lady was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen in the world. But that, he being very gay and lively, she was *mortal* jealous of him ; and in a fit of that sort, had eloped from him. For altho’ she loved him dearly, and he doated upon her (as well he might, since, as they had seen, she was the *finest creature that ever the sun shone upon*), yet she was apt to be very wilful and sullen, if he might take the liberty to say so—but truth was truth ;—and if she could not have her own way in every thing, would be for leaving him. That she had three or four times played his master such tricks ; but with all the virtue and innocence in the world ; running away to an intimate friend of hers, who, tho’ a young lady of honour, was but too indulgent to her in this her *only* failing : for which reason his master had brought her to London-lodgings ; their usual residence being in the country : And that, on his refusing to satisfy her about a lady he had been seen with in the park, she had, for the first time since she came to town, served his master thus : Whom he had left half-distracted on that account.’

And truly well he might, poor gentleman ! cried the honest folks, pitying me be ore they saw me.

‘ He told them how he came by his intelligence of her ; and made himself such an interest with them, that they helped him to a change of cloaths for himself ; and the landlord, at his request, privately inquired, if the lady actually remained at Mrs. Moore’s ; and for how long she had taken the lodgings : Which he found only to be for a *week* certain : But she had said, that she believed she should hardly stay so long. And then it was that he wrote his letter, and sent it by honest Peter Partrick, as thou hast heard.’

When I came, my person and dress having answered Will's description, the people were ready to worship me. I now-and then sighed, now-and-then put on a lighter air; which, however, I designed should shew more of vexation ill-disguised, than of real cheerfulness: And they told Will, It was a thousand pities so fine a lady should have such *skittish tricks*; adding, that she might expose herself to great dangers by them; for that there were Rakes every-where [*Lovelace's in every corner, Jack!*], and many about that town, who would leave nothing unattempted to get into her company: And altho' they might not prevail upon her, yet might they nevertheless hurt her reputation; and, in time, estrange the affections of so fine a gentleman from her.

Good sensible people, these!—Hay, Jack! Here, landlord; one word with you. My servant, I find, has acquainted you with the reason of my coming this way. An unhappy affair, landlord! A very unhappy affair! But never was there a more virtuous woman.

So, Sir, she seems to be. A thousand pities her ladyship has such ways—And to so good-humoured a gentleman as you seem to be, Sir.

Mother-spoilt, landlord!—Mother-spoilt! that's the thing!—But, sighing, I must make the best of it. What I want *you* to do for me, is to lend me a great coat. I care not what it is. If my spouse should see me at a distance, she would make it very difficult for me to get at her speech. A great coat with a cape, if you have one. I must come upon her before she is aware.

I am afraid, Sir, I have none fit for such a gentleman as you.

O, any thing will do!—The worse the better.

Exit landlord. Re-enter with two great coats.

Ay, landlord, This will be best; for I can button the

the cape over the lower part of my face. Don't I look devilishly down and concern'd, landlord?

I never saw a gentleman with a better-natured look.
'Tis pity you should have such tryals, Sir.

I must be very unhappy, no doubt of it, landlord. And yet I am a little pleas'd, you must needs think, that I have found her out before any great inconvenience has arisen to her. However, if I cannot break her of these freaks, she'll break my heart; for I do love her with all her failings.

The good woman, who was within hearing of all this, pitied me much.

Pray, your honour, said she, if I may be so bold, was madam ever a mamma?

No!—and I sighed—We have been but a little while married; and, as I may say to *you*, it is her own fault that she is not in that way [Not a word of a lye in this, Jack]. But to tell you truth, madam, she may be compared to the dog in the manger—

I understand you, Sir, (simpering)—She is but young, Sir. I have heard of one or two such skittish young ladies in my time, Sir.—But when madam is in that way, I dare say, as she loves you (and it would be strange if she did not!), all this will be over, and she may make the best of wives..

That's all my hope.

She is as fine a lady as I ever beheld. I hope, Sir, you won't be too severe. She'll get over all these freaks, if once she be a mamma, I warrant.

I can't be severe to her; she knows that. The moment I see her, all resentment is over with me, if she give me but one kind look.

All this time, I was adjusting my horseman's coat, and Will was putting in the ties of my wig, and buttoning the cape over my chin.

I ask'd the gentlewoman for a little powder. She brought me a powder-box, and I lightly shook the

puff over my hat, and flapt one side of it, tho' the lace look'd a little too gay for my covering ; and slouching it over my eyes, Shall I be known, think you, Madam ?

Your honour is so expert, Sir !—I wish, if I may be so bold, your lady has not some *cause* to be jealous. But it will be impossible, if you keep your laced cloaths covered, that any-body shou'd know you in that dress to be the same gentleman—Except they find you out by your clocked stockens.

Well observ'd—Can't you, landlord, lend or sell me a pair of stockens, that will draw over these ? I can cut off the feet, if they won't go into my shoes.

He could let me have a pair of coarse, but clean, stirrup-stockens, if I pleased.

The best in the world for the purpose.

He fetch'd them. Will. drew them on ; and my legs then made a good gouty appearance.

The good woman, smiling, wished me success ; and so did the landlord : And as thou knowest that I am not a bad mimic, I took a cane, which I borrowed of the landlord, and stooped in the shoulders to a quarter of a foot of less height, and stumph'd away cross to the Bowling-green, to practise a little the hobbling gaite of a gouty man. The landlady whisper'd her husband, as Will. tells me, He's a good one, I warrant him !—I dare say the fault lies not all of one side. While mine host replied, that I was so lively and so good-natur'd a gentleman, that he did not know who could be angry with me, do what I would. A sensible fellow !—I wish my charmer were of the same opinion.

And now I am going to try, if I can't agree with goody Moore for lodgings and other conveniences for my sick wife.

Wife, Lovelace ! methinks thou interrogatest.

Yes, *wife* ; for who knows what cautions the dear fugitive may have given in apprehension of me ?

But

But has goody Moore any other lodgings to let?

Yes, yes; I have taken care of that; and find, that she has just such conveniences as I want. And I know that my wife will like them. For, altho' married, I can do every thing I please; and that's a bold word, you know. But had she only a garret to let, I would have liked it; and been a poor author afraid of arrests, and made that my place of refuge; yet would have made shift to pay beforehand for what I had. I can suit myself to any condition, that's my comfort.



THE widow Moore return'd! say you—Down, down, flutterer!—This impudent heart is more troublesome to me than my conscience, I think.—I shall be obliged to hoarsen my voice, and roughen my character, to keep up with its puppily dancings.

But, let me see,—Shall I be angry or pleased, when I am admitted to my beloved's presence?

Angry, to be sure.—Has she not broken her word with me?—At a time, too, when I was meditating to do her grateful justice?—And is not breach of word a dreadful crime in good folks? I have ever been for forming my judgment of the nature of things and actions, not so much from what they are in themselves, as from the character of the actors. Thus it would be as odd a thing in such as we to *keep* our words with a lady, as it would be wicked in her to *break* hers to us.

Seest thou not, that this unseasonable gravity is admitted to quell the palpitations of this unmanageable heart? But still it will go on with its boundings. I'll try, as I ride in my chariot, to *tranquillize*.

Ride, Bob! so little a way?

Yes, ride, Jack; for am I not lame? And will it not look well to have a lodger who keeps his chariot? What widow, what servant, asks questions of a man with an equipage?

My coachman, as well as my other servant, is under Will's tuition.

Never was there such a hideous rascal as he has made himself. The devil only, and his other master, can know him. They both have set their marks upon him. As to my Honour's mark, it will never be out of *his damn'd wide mothe*, as he calls it. For the dog will be hang'd before he can lose the rest of his teeth by age.

I am gone.

LETTER II.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Hamstead, Friday Night, June 9.

NOw, Belford, for the narrative of narratives. I will continue it, as I have opportunity; and that so dextrously, that if I break off twenty times, thou shalt not discern where I piece my thread.

Although grievously afflicted with the gout, I alighted out of my chariot (leaning very hard on my cane with one hand, and on my new servant's shoulder with the other) the same instant almost that he had knock'd at the door, that I might be sure of admission into the house.

I took care to button my great coat about me, and to cover with it even the pommel of my sword; it being a little too gay for my years. I knew not what occasion I might have for my sword. I stoop'd forward; blink'd with my eyes to conceal their lustre [No vanity in saying that, Jack!]; my chin wrapt up for the tooth-ach; my slouch'd, laced hat, and so much of my wig as was visible, giving me, all together, the appearance of an antiquated beau.

My wife, I resolved beforehand, should have a complication of disorders.

The

The maid came to the door. I ask'd for her mistress. She shew'd me into one of the parlours; and I sat down, with a gouty Oh!—

Enter goody Moore.

Your servant, Madam—but you must excuse me; I cannot well stand.—I find by the bill at the door, that you have lodgings to let [Mumbling my words as if, like my man Will, I had lost some of my fore-teeth]: Be pleased to inform me what they are; for I like your situation:—And I will tell you my family—I have a wife, a good old woman—Older than myself, by the way, a pretty deal. She is in a bad state of health, and is advised into the Hamstead air. She will have two maid-servants and a footman. The coach or chariot (I shall not have them up both together), we can put up any-where, and the coachman will be with his horses.

When, Sir, shall you want to come in?

I will take them from this very day; and, if convenient, will bring my wife in the afternoon.

Perhaps, Sir, you would board, as well as lodge?

That as you please. It will save me the trouble of bringing my cook, if we do. And I suppose you have servants who know how to dress a couple of dishes. My wife must eat plain food, and I don't love kickshaws.

We have a single lady, who will be gone in two or three days. She has one of the best apartments: That will then be at liberty.

You have one or two good ones mean time, I presume, Madam, just to receive my wife; for we have lost time—These damn'd physicians—Excuse me, Madam, I am not used to curse; but it is owing to the love I have for my wife—They have kept her in hand, till they are ashame'd to take more fees, and now advise her to the air. I wish we had sent her hither at first. But we must now make the best of it.

Excuse

Excuse me, Madam (for she looked hard at me), that I am muffled up thus in this warm weather. I am but too sensible, that I have left my chamber sooner than I ought, and perhaps shall have a return of my gout for it. I came out thus muffled up, with a dreadful pain in my jaws; an ague in them, I believe. But my poor dear will not be satisfied with any body's care but mine. And, as I told you, we have lost time.

You shall see what accommodations I have, if you please, Sir. But I doubt, you are too lame to walk up stairs.

I can make shift to hobble up, now I have rested a little. I'll just look upon the apartment my wife is to have. Any thing may do for the servants: And as you seem to be a good sort of gentlewoman, I shan't stand for a price, and will pay well, besides, for the trouble I shall give.

She led the way; and I, leaning upon the banisters, made shift to get up with less fatigue than I expected from ancles so weak. But oh! Jack, What was Sixtus the Vth's artful depression of his natural powers to mine, when, as the half-dead Montalto, he gaped for the pretendedly unsought Pontificate, and, the moment he was chosen, leapt upon the prancing beast, which it was thought, by the amazed conclave, he was not able to mount without help of chairs and men? Never was there a more joyous heart and lighter heels than mine, joined together, yet both denied their functions; the one fluttering in secret, ready to burst its bars for relief-ful expression, the others obliged to an hobbling motion; when, unrestrained, they would, in their master's imagination, have mounted him to the lunar world, without the help of a ladder.

There were three rooms on a floor; two of them han some; and the third, she said, still handsomer; but the lady was in it.

I saw!—I saw, she was! for as I hobbled up, crying out upon my weak ancles, in the hoarse mumbling voice

voice I had assumed, I beheld a little piece of her, just casting an eye, with the door a-jar, as they call it, to observe who was coming up; and, seeing such an old clumsy fellow great-coated in weather so warm, slouched, and muffled up, she withdrew, shutting the door without any emotion. But it was not so with me; for thou canst not imagine how my heart danced to my mouth, at the very glimpse of her; so that I was afraid the thump, thump, thumping villain, which had so lately thumped as much to no purpose, would have choak'd me.

I liked the lodgings well; and the more, as she said the third room was still handsomer. I must sit down, Madam (and chose the darkest part of the room): Won't you take a seat yourself? No price shall part us. But I will leave the terms to you and my wife, if you please: And also whether for board or not. Only please to take This for earnest, putting a guinea into her hand.—And one thing I will say; My poor wife loves money; but is not an ill-natured woman. She was a great fortune to me: But, as the real estate goes away at her death, I would fain preserve her for that reason, as well as for the love I bear her, as an honest man. But if she makes too close a bargain with you, tell *me*; and, unknown to *her*, I will make it up. This is my constant way: She loves to have her pen'worths; and I would not have her vexed or made uneasy on any account.

She said, I was a very considerate gentleman; and, upon the condition I had mentioned, she was content to leave the terms to my lady.

But, Madam, cannot a-body just peep into the other apartment, that I may be more particular to my wife in the furniture of it?

The lady desires to be private, Sir—But—And was going to ask her leave.

I caught hold of her hand—However, stay, stay,
Madam:

Madam : It mayn't be proper, if the lady loves to be private. Don't let me intrude upon the lady—

No intrusion, Sir, I dare say : The lady is good-humoured. She will be so kind as to step down into the parlour, I dare say. As she stays so little a while, I am sure she will not wish to stand in my way.

No, Madam, that's true, if she be good-humoured, as you say—Has she been with you long, Madam ?

But yesterday, Sir—

I believe I just now saw the glimpse of her. She seems to be an elderly lady.

No, Sir ; you're mistaken. She's a young lady ; and one of the handsomest I ever saw.

Cot-so, I beg her pardon ! Not but that I should have liked her the better, were she to stay longer, if she had been elderly. I have a strange taste, Madam, you'll say, but I really, for my wife's sake, love every elderly woman : Indeed I ever thought age was to be reverenced, which made me (taking the fortune into the scale too, *that I own*) make my addresses to my present dear.

Very good of you, Sir, to respect age : We all hope to live to be old.

Right, Madam. But you say the lady is beautiful. Now you must know, that tho' I chuse to converse with the elderly, yet I love to see a beautiful young woman, just as I love to see fine flowers in a garden. There's no casting an eye upon her, is there, without her notice ? For in this dress, and thus muffled up about my jaws, I should not care to be seen, any more than she, let her love privacy as much as she will.

I will go ask, if I may shew a gentleman the apartment, Sir ; and, as you are a married gentleman, and not *over*-young, she'll perhaps make the less scruple.

Then, like me, she loves elderly folks best, perhaps. But it may be she has suffered by young ones ?

I fancy she has, Sir, or is afraid she shall. She desired to be very private, and if by description inquired after, to be denied.

Thou art true woman, goody Moore, thought I! Good luck!—Good luck!—What may be her story then, I pray?

She is pretty reserv'd in her story; but, to tell you my thoughts, I believe *Love* is in the case: She is always in tears, and does not much care for company.

Nay, Madam, it becomes not me to dive into ladies secrets; I want not to pry into other peoples affairs. But, pray, how does she employ herself?—Yet she came but yesterday; so you can't tell.

Writing continually, Sir.

These women, Jack, when you ask them questions by way of information, don't care to be ignorant of any thing.

Nay, excuse me, Madam, I am very far from being an inquisitive man. But if her case be difficult, and not merely *Love*, as she is a friend of yours, I would give her my advice.

Then you are a lawyer, Sir—

Why, indeed, Madam, I was some time at the Bar; but I have long left practice; yet am much consulted by my friends in difficult points. In a pauper case I frequently *give* money; but never *take* any from the richest.

You are a very good gentleman, then, Sir.

Ay, Madam, we cannot live always here; and we ought to do what good we can—But I hate to appear officious. If the lady stays any time, and thinks fit, upon better acquaintance, to let me in to her case, it may be a happy day for her, if I find it a just one; for, you must know, that when I was at the Bar, I never was such a sad fellow as to undertake, for the sake of a paltry fee, to make white black, and black white; for what would that have been, but to endeavour to establish iniquity by quirks, while I robbed the innocent?

You

You are an excellent gentleman, Sir : I wish (and then she sighed) I had had the happiness to know there was such a lawyer in the world ; and to have been acquainted with him.

Come, come, Mrs. Moore, I think your name is, it may not be too late—When you and I are better acquainted, I may help *you* perhaps.—But mention nothing of this to the lady ; for, as I said, I hate to appear officious.

This prohibition, I knew, if goody Moore answer'd the specimen she had given of her womanhood, would make her take the first opportunity to tell, were it to be necessary to my purpose that she should.

I appeared, upon the whole, so indifferent about seeing the room, or the lady, that the good woman was the more eager I should see both. And the rather, as I, to stimulate her, declared, that there was more required in my eye to merit the character of a handsome woman, than most people thought necessary ; and that I had never seen six truly lovely ladies in my life.

To be brief, she went in ; and after a little while came out again. The lady, Sir, is retired to her closet, so you may go in and look at the room.

Then how my heart began again to play its pug's tricks !

I hobbled in, and stump'd about, and liked it very much ; and was sure my wife would. I begg'd excuse for sitting down, and ask'd, Who was the minister of the place ? If he were a good preacher ? Who preached at the chapel ? And if *he* were a good preacher, and good *liver* too, Madam—I must inquire after *That* : For I love, I must needs say, that the Clergy should practise what they preach.

Very right, Sir ; but that is not so often the case, as were to be wished.

More's the pity, Madam. But I have a great veneration for the Clergy in general. It is more a satire upon Human nature, than upon the Cloth, if

we

we suppose those who have the *best* opportunities to be good, less perfect than other people. For my part, I don't love *professional* any more than *national* reflections.—But I keep the lady in her closet. My gout makes me rude.

Then up from my seat stumped I—What do you call these window-curtains, Madam?

Stuff-damask, Sir.

It looks mighty well, truly. I like it better than silk. It is warmer to be sure, and much fitter for lodgings in the country; especially for people in years. The bed is in a pretty taste.

It is neat and clean, Sir: That's all we pretend to.

Ay, mighty well—Very well—A silk camlet, I think—Very well, truly!—I am sure my wife will like it. But we would not turn the lady out of her lodging for the world. The other two apartments will do for us at the present.

Then stumping towards the closet, over the door of which hung a picture—What picture is that?—Oh! I see: A St. Cæcilia!

A common print, Sir—

Pretty well, pretty well! It is after an Italian master.—I would not for the world turn the lady out of her apartment. We can make shift with the other two, repeated I, louder still: But yet mumblingly hoarse; for I had as great regard to uniformity in accent, as to my words.

O Belford! to be so near my angel, think what a painful constraint I was under!—

I was resolved to fetch her out, if possible: And pretending to be going—You can't agree as to any time, Mrs. Moore, when we can have this third room, can you?—Not that (whisper'd I, loud enough to be heard in the next room; Not that) I would inconvenience the lady: But I would tell my wife whenabouts—And women, you know, Mrs. Moore, love to have every thing before them of this nature.

Mrs.

Mrs. Moore, says my charmer [and never did her voice sound so harmonious to me : Oh how my heart bounded again ! It even talked to me, in a manner ; for I thought I *heard*, as well as *felt*, its unruly flutters ; and every vein about me seemed a pulse : Mrs. Moore], you may acquaint the gentleman, that I shall stay here only for two or three days, at most, till I receive an answer to a letter I have written into the country ; and rather than be your hindrance, I will take up with any apartment a pair of stairs higher.

Not for the world ! Not for the world, young lady, cried I !—My wife, well as I love her, should lie in a garret, rather than put such a considerate lady, as you seem to be, to the least inconvenien-cy.

She opened not the door yet ; and I said, But since you have so much goodness, Madam, if I could but just look into the closet, as I stand, I could tell my wife, whether it is large enough to hold a cabinet she much values, and will have with her where-ever she goes.

Then my charmer opened the door, and blazed upon me, as it were, in a flood of light, like what one might imagine would strike a man, who, born blind, had by some propitious power been blessed with his sight, all at once, in a meridian sun.

Upon my soul, I never was so strangely affected before. I had much ado to forbear discovering myself that instant : But, hesitatingly, and in great disorder, I said, looking into the closet, and around it, There is room, I see, for my wife's cabinet ; and it has many jewels in it of high price ; but, upon my soul (for I could not forbear swearing, like a puppy : —Habit is a cursed thing, Jack—) Nothing so valuable as the lady I see, can be brought into it !—

She started, and looked at me with terror. The truth of the compliment, as far as I know, had taken dissimulation from my accent.

I saw it was impossible to conceal myself longer from her, any more than (from the violent impulses of my passion) to forbear manifesting myself. I unbuttoned therefore my cape, I pulled off my flapt, slouched hat ; I threw open my great coat, and, like the devil in Milton (an odd comparison tho' !),

*I started up in my own form divine,
Touch'd by the beam of her celestial eye,
More potent than Ithuriel's spear !—*

Now, Belford, for a similitude—Now for a likeness to illustrate the surprising scene, and the effect it had upon my charmer, and the gentlewoman!—But nothing *was* like it, or equal to it. The plain fact can only describe it, and set it off. Thus then take it.

She no sooner saw who it was, than she gave three violent screams ; and, before I could catch her in my arms (as I was about to do the moment I discover'd myself), down she sunk at my feet, in a fit ; which made me curse my indiscretion for so suddenly, and with so much emotion, revealing myself.

The gentlewoman, seeing so strange an alteration in my person, and features, and voice, and dres, cried out, Murder, help ! Murder, help ! by turns, for half a dozen times running. This alarmed the house, and up ran two servant maids, and my servant after them. I cried out for water and hartshorn, and every one flew a different way, one of the maids as fast down as she came up ; while the gentlewoman ran out of one room into another, and by turns up and down the apartment we were in, without meaning or end, wringing her foolish hands, and not knowing what she did.

Up then came running a gentleman and his sister, fetched, and brought in by the maid who had run down ; and who having let in a cursed crabbed old wretch, hobbling with his gout, and mumbling with his hoarse broken-toothed voice, was metamorphosed all at once

once into a lively gay young fellow, with a clear accent, and all his teeth ; and she would have it, that I was neither more nor less than the devil, and could not keep her eye from my foot ; expecting, no doubt, every minute to see it discover itself to be cloven.

For my part, I was so intent upon restoring my angel, that I regarded nobody else. And at last, she slowly recovering motion, with bitter sighs and sobs (only the whites of her eyes however appearing for some moments), I called upon her in the tenderest accent, as I kneeled by her, my arm supporting her head ; My angel ! My charmer ! My Clarissa ! look upon me, my dearest life !—I am not angry with you !—I will forgive you, my best beloved !—

The gentleman and his sister knew not what to make of all this : And the less, when my fair one, recovering her sight, snatched another look at me ; and then again groaned, and fainted away.

I threw up the closet-sash for air, and then left her to the care of the young gentlewoman, the same notable Miss Rawlins, whom I had heard of at the Flask ; and to that of Mrs. Moore ; who by this time had recover'd herself ; and then retiring to one corner of the room, I made my servant pull off my gouty stockings, brush my hat, and loop it up into the usual smart cock.

I then stept to the closet to Mr. Rawlins, whom, in the general confusion, I had not much minded before.—Sir, said I, you have an uncommon scene before you. The lady is my wife, and no gentleman's presence is necessary here but my own.

I beg pardon, Sir : If the lady is your wife, I have no busines here. But, Sir, by her concern at seeing you—

Pray, Sir, none of your *if's*, and *but's*, I beseech you : Nor *your* concern about the *lady's* concern. You are a very unqualified judge in this cause ; and I beg of you, Sir, to oblige me with your absence. The

The ladies only are proper to be present on this occasion, added I ; and I think myself obliged to them for their care and kind assistance.

'Tis well he made not another word : For I found my choler begin to rise. I could not bear, that the finest neck, and arms, and foot, in the world, should be exposed to the eyes of any man living but mine.

I withdrew once more from the closet, finding her beginning to recover, lest the sight of me too soon, should throw her back again.

The first words she said, looking round her with great emotion, were, O hide me ! Hide me ! Is he gone !—O hide me ! Is he gone !

Sir, said Miss Rawlins, coming to me with an air somewhat peremptory and assured, This is some surprising case. The lady cannot bear the sight of you. What you have done, is best known to yourself. But another such fit will probably be her last. It would be but kind, therefore, for you to retire.

It behov'd me to have so notable a person of my party ; and the rather, as I had disengaged her impertinent brother.

The dear creature, said I, may well be concerned to see me. If you, Madam, had a husband who loved you, as I love her, you would not, I am confident, fly from him, and expose yourself to hazards, as she does whenever she has not all her way—And yet with a mind not capable of intentional evil—But, mother-spoilt ! This is her fault, and All her fault : And the more inexcusable it is, as I am the man of her choice, and have reason to think she loves me above all the men in the world.

Here, Jack, was a story to support to the lady ; face to face too [a] !

You

[a] And here, Belford, lest thou, thro' inattention, shouldest be surprised at my assurance, let me remind thee (and that, thus, by way of marginal observation, that I may not break in upon my narrative), that this my intrepidity was but a consequence of the measures I had previously

You speak like a gentleman ; you look like a gentleman, said Miss Rawlins—But, Sir, this is a strange case ; the lady seems to dread the sight of you.

No wonder, Madam ; taking her a little on one side, nearer to Mrs. Moore. I have three times already forgiven the dear creature.—But this jealousy —There is a spice of *that* in it—and of *phrensy* too (whispered I, that it might have the face of a secret, and, of consequence, the more engage their attention) —But our story is too long—

I then made a motion to go to the lady. But they desired, that I would walk into the next room ; and they would endeavour to prevail upon her to lie down.

I begg'd

previously concerted (as I have from time to time acquainted thee) in apprehension of such an event as has fallen out. For had not the dear creature already passed for my wife, before no less than four worthy gentlemen of family and fortune *? And before Mrs. Sinclair, and her household, and Miss Partington ?—And had she not agreed to her uncle's expedient, that she should pass for such, from the time of Mr. Hickman's application to that uncle † ; and that the worthy captain Tomlinson should be allowed to propagate that belief ; as he had actually reported it to two families (*tbeypossibly to more*) ; purposely that it might come to the ears of James Harlowe ; and serve for a foundation for uncle John to build his reconciliation-scheme upon || ? And canst thou think, that nothing was meant by all this contrivance ? And that I am not still *further* prepared to support my story ?

Indeed, I little thought, at the time that I formed these precautionary schemes, that she would ever have been able, *if willing*, to get out of my hands. All that I hoped I should have occasion to have recourse to them for, was only, that in case I should have the courage to make the grand attempt, and should succeed in it, to bring the dear creature (and this out of tenderness to her ; for what attention did I ever yet pay to the grief, the execrations, the tears of a woman I had triumphed over ?) to bear me in her sight ; to expostulate with me ; to be pacified by my pleas, and by her own future hopes, founded upon the reconciliatory project, upon my reiterated vows, and upon the captain's assurances— Since, in that case, to forgive me, to have gone on with me for a week, would have been to forgive me, to have gone on with me, for ever. And then had my eligible life of honour taken place ; her trials would all have been then over ; and she would have known nothing but gratitude, love, and joy, to the end of one of our lives. For never would I, never could I, have abandoned such an admirable creature as this. Thou knowest, I never was a sordid villain to any of her inferiors— Her inferiors, I may say,—For, who is not her inferior ?

* Vol. iii. p. 321. † Vol. iv. p. 262. || Vol. iv. p. 264.

I begg'd that they would not suffer her to talk ; for that she was accustomed to fits, and would, when in this way, talk of any thing that came uppermost ; and the more she was suffered to run on, the worse she was ; and if not kept quiet, would fall into ravings ; which might possibly hold her a week.

They promised to keep her quiet ; and I withdrew into the next room ; ordering every one down but Mrs. Moore and Miss Rawlins.

She was full of exclamations. Unhappy creature ! miserable ! ruined ! and undone ! she called herself ; wrung her hands, and begged they would assist her to escape from the terrible evils she should otherwise be made to suffer.

They preached patience and quietness to her ; and would have had her to lie down ; but she refused ; sinking, however, into an easy chair ; for she trembled so, she could not stand.

By this time, I hoped that she was enough recover'd to bear a presence, that it behoved me to make her bear ; and fearing she would throw out something in her exclamations, that would still more disconcert me, I went into the room again.

O ! there he is ! said she, and threw her apron over her face—I cannot see him !—I cannot look upon him !—Begone ! begone ! touch me not !—

For I took her struggling hand, beseeching her to be pacified ; and assuring her, that I would make all up with her, upon her own terms and wishes.

Base man ! said the violent lady, I have no wishes, but never to behold you more ! Why must I be thus pursued and haunted ? Have you not made me miserable enough already ? Despoiled of all succour and help, and of every friend, I am contented to be poor, low, and miserable, so I may be free from your persecutions !—

Miss Rawlins stared at me [A confident flut this Miss Rawlins, thought I !] So did Mrs. Moore—I told you so ! whisperingly said I, turning to the women ; shaking my head with a face of great concern and pity ; and then to my charmer, My dear creature, how you rave !—You will not easily recover from the effects of this violence ! Have patience, my love ! Be pacified ! and we will coolly talk this matter over : For you expose yourself, as well as me : These ladies will certainly think, you have fallen among robbers ; and that I am the chief of them.

So you are ! so you are ! stamping, her face still covered [She thought of Wednesday night, no doubt]; and, sighing as if her heart were breaking, she put her hand to her forehead—I shall be quite distracted !

I will not, my dearest love, uncover your face. You shall *not* look upon me, since I am so odious to you. But this is a violence I never thought you capable of.—

And I would have pressed her hand, as I held it, with my lips ; but she drew it from me with indignation.

Unhand me, Sir, said she. I will not be touched by you. Leave me to my fate. What right, what title, have you to persecute me thus ?

What right, what title, my dear !—But this is not a time—I have a letter from Captain Tomlinson—Here it is—offering it to her—

I will receive nothing from your hands—Tell me not of Captain Tomlinson—Tell me not of anybody—You have no right to invade me thus—Once more, leave me to my fate—Have you not made me miserable enough ?—

I touched a delicate string, on purpose to set her in such a passion before the women, as might confirm the intimation I had given of a phrenical disorder.

What a turn is here !—Lately so happy !—Nothing wanting but a reconciliation between you and your friends !

friends!—That reconciliation in such a happy train!—Shall so *slight*, so *accidental* an occasion be suffered to overturn all our happiness?

She started up with a trembling impatience, her apron falling from her indignant face—Now, said she, that thou darest to call the occasion *slight* and *accidental*, and that I am happily out of thy vile hands, and out of a house I have reason to believe *as* vile, traitor and wretch that thou art, I will venture to cast an eye upon thee—And O that it were in my power, in mercy to my sex, to look thee first into shame and remorse, and then into death!

This violent tragedy-speech, and the high manner in which she uttered it, had its desired effect. I looked upon the women, and upon her, by turns, with a pitying eye; and they shook their wise heads, and besought *me* to retire, and *her* to lie down to compose herself.

This hurricane, like other hurricanes, was presently allayed by a shower. She threw herself once more into her armed chair—And begg'd pardon of the women for her passionate excess; but not of me: Yet I was in hopes, that when compliments were stirring, I should have come in for a share.

Indeed, ladies, said I (with assurance enough, thou'lt say), this violence is not natural to my beloved's temper—Misapprehension—

Misapprehension, wretch!—And want I excuses from thee!

What a scorn was every lovely feature agitated by!

Then turning her face from me, I have not patience, O thou guileful betrayer, to look upon thee!—Begone! Begone! With a face so unblushing, how darest thou my presence?

I thought then, that the character of a husband obliged me to be angry.

You may one day, Madam, repent this treatment:

—By my soul you may.—You know I have not deserved it of you—You know I have not.

Do I know you have not?—Wretch! Do I know—

You do, Madam!—And never did man of my figure and consideration [I thought it was proper to throw that in] meet with such treatment. [She lifted up her hands: Indignation kept her silent.]—But all is of a piece with the charge you bring against me of *despoiling you of all succour and help*, of making you *poor and low*, and with other unprecedented language. I will only say, before these two gentlewomen, that since it *must* be so, and since your former esteem for me is turned into so riveted an aversion, I will soon, *very soon*, make you intirely easy. I *will* be gone:—I *will* leave you to *your own fate*, as you call it; and may That be happy!—Only, that I may not appear to be a spoiler, a robber indeed, let me know whither I shall send your apparel, and every thing that belongs to you, and I *will* send it.

Send it to this place; and assure me, that you will never molest me more; never more come near me; and that is all I ask of you.

I *will* do so, Madam, said I, with a dejected air. But did I ever think I should be so indifferent to you?—However, you must permit me to insist on your reading this letter; and on your seeing Captain Tomlinson, and hearing what he has to say from your uncle. He will be here by-and-by.

Don't trifle with me, said she, in an imperious tone—Do as you offer. I will not receive any letter from your hands. If I see Captain Tomlinson, it shall be on his *own* account; not on *yours*. You tell me you will send me my apparel: If you would have me believe any thing you say, let This be the test of your sincerity—Leave me now, and send my things.

The women stared. They did nothing but stare ; and appeared to be more and more at a loss what to make of the matter between us.

I pretended to be going from her in a pet : But when I had got to the door, I turned back ; and, as if I had recollect'd myself, One word more, my dearest creature !—Charming even in your anger !—O my fond soul ! said I, turning half-round, and pulling out my handkerchief.

I believe, Jack, my eyes did glisten a little—I have no doubt but they did.—The women pitied me. Honest souls !—They shew'd, that they had each of them a handkerchief as well as I. So, hast thou not observed (to give a familiar illustration) every man in a company of a dozen, or more, obligingly pull out his watch, when some one has asked, What's o'clock ?

One word only, Madam, repeated I, as soon as my voice had recovered its tone—I have represented to Captain Tomlinson in the most favourable light the cause of our present misunderstanding. You know what your uncle insists upon ; and which you have acquiesced with. The letter in my hand [and again I offered it to her] will acquaint you with what you have to apprehend from your brother's active malice.

She was going to speak in a high accent, putting the letter from her, with an open palm—Nay, hear me out, Madam—The Captain, you know, has reported our *marriage* to two different persons. It is come to your brother's ears. My own relations have also heard of it. Letters were brought me from town this morning, from Lady Betty Lawrance and Miss Montague. Here they are [I pulled them out of my pocket, and offered them to her, with That of the Captain ; but she held back her still open palm, that she might not receive them] : Reflect, Madam, I beseech you reflect, upon the fatal consequences

which this your high resentment may be attended with.

Ever since I knew you, said she, I have been in a wilderness of doubt and error. I bless God that I am out of your hands. I will transact for myself what relates to myself. I dismiss all your solicitude for me. Am I not my own mistress!—Am I not—

The women stared [The devil stare ye, thought I, can ye do nothing but stare?]. It was high time to stop her here. I raised my voice to drown hers— You used, my dearest creature, to have a tender and apprehensive heart—You never had so much reason for such a one as now.

Let me judge for myself, upon what I shall *see*, not upon what I shall *hear*—Do you think I shall ever—

I dreaded her going on—I *must* be heard, Madam, raising my voice still higher. You must let me read one paragraph or two of This letter to you, if you will not read it yourself—

Begone from me, Man!—Begone from me with thy Letters! What pretence hast thou for tormenting me thus—

Dearest creature, what questions you ask! Questions that you can as well answer yourself—

I *can*, I *will*—And *thus* I answer them—

Still louder raised I my voice. She was overborne. Sweet soul! It would be hard, thought I [and yet I was very angry with her], if such a spirit as thine cannot be brought to yield to such a one as mine!

I lowered my voice on her silence. All gentle, all *intreative*, my accent: My head bowed; one hand held out; the other on my honest heart:—For heaven's sake, my dearest creature, resolve to see Captain Tomlinson with temper. He would have come along with me: But I was willing to try to soften your mind first, on this fatal misapprehension; and This for the sake of your own wishes: For what is it otherwise to me, whether your friends, are, or are

are not, reconciled to us? *Do I want any favour from them?*—For your own mind's sake therefore, frustrate not Captain Tomlinson's negotiation. That worthy gentleman will be here in the afternoon—Lady Betty will be in town with my cousin Montague, in a day or two. They will be your visitors. I beseech you do not carry this misunderstanding so far, as that Lord M. and Lady Betty, and Lady Sarah, may know it [*How considerable this made me look to the women!*], Lady Betty will not let you rest till you consent to accompany her to her own seat—And to that lady may you safely intrust your cause.

Again, upon my pausing a moment, she was going to break out. I liked not the turn of her countenance, nor the tone of her voice—“ And thinkest thou, base wretch,” were the words she did utter. I again raised my voice, and drowned hers—*Base wretch, Madam!*—You know, that I have not deserved the violent names you have called me. Words so opprobrious, from a mind so gentle—But this treatment is from *you, Madam!*—From *you*, whom I love more than my own soul—By that soul, I swear that I do—[The women looked upon each other. They seemed pleased with my ardor. Women, whether wives, maids, or widows, love ardors. Even Miss Howe, thou knowest, speaks up for ardors (*a*)]—Nevertheless, I must say, that you have carried matters too far for the occasion. I see you hate me—

She was just going to speak—if we are to *separate for ever*, in a strong and solemn voice, proceeded I, this island shall not long be troubled with me.—Meantime, only be pleased to give these letters a perusal, and consider what is to be said to your uncle's friend; and what he is to say to your uncle.—Any thing will I come into (renounce me if you will), that shall make for *your* peace, and for the reconciliation your heart was so lately set upon. But I humbly conceive,

C 4

that

that it is necessary, that you should come into better temper with me, were it but to give a favourable appearance to what *has passed*, and weight to any *future application* to your friends, in whatever way you shall think proper to make it.

I then put the letters into her lap, and retired into the next apartment with a low bow, and a very solemn air.

I was soon followed by the two women. Mrs. Moore withdrew to give the fair Perverse time to read them : Miss Rawlins for the same reason ; and because she was sent for home.

The widow besought her speedy return. I joined in the same request ; and she was ready enough to promise to oblige us.

I excused myself to Mrs. Moore for the disguise I had appeared in at first, and for the story I had invented. I told her, that I held myself obliged to satisfy her for the whole floor we were upon ; and for an upper room for my servant ; and that for a month certain.

She made many scruples, and begg'd she might not be urged on this head, till she had consulted Miss Rawlins.

I consented ; but told her, that she had taken my earnest ; and I hoped there was no room for dispute.

Just then Miss Rawlins return'd, with an air of eager curiosity ; and having been told, what had pass'd between Mrs. Moore and me, she gave herself airs of office immediately : Which I humoured, plainly perceiving, that if I had *her* with me, I had the other.

She wished, if there were time for it, and if it were not quite impertinent in her to desire it, that I would give Mrs. Moore and her a brief history of an affair, which, as she said, bore the face of novelty, mystery, and surprize : For sometimes it looked to her as if we were married ; at other times, that point appeared doubtful ; and yet the lady did not absolutely deny

it ; but, upon the whole, thought herself highly injured.

I said, That ours was a very particular case : That were I to acquaint them with it, some part of it would hardly appear credible. But, however, I would give them, as they seemed to be persons of discretion, a brief account of the whole ; and this in so plain and sincere a manner, that it should clear up to their satisfaction every thing that had passed, or might hereafter pass between us.

They sat down by me, and threw every feature of their faces into attention. I was resolved to go as near the truth as possible, lest any thing should drop from my spouse to impeach my veracity ; and yet keep in view what passed at the Flask.

It is necessary, altho' thou knowest my whole story, and a good deal of my views, that thou shouldest be apprized of the substance of what I told them.

' I gave them, in as concise a manner as I was able, ' the history of our families, fortunes, alliances, anti-pathies (her brother's, and mine, particularly). I ' averred the truth of our private marriage.' The Captain's letter, which I will inclose, will give thee my reasons for that : And besides, the women might also, perhaps, have proposed a parson to me by way of compromise. ' I told them the condition my spouse ' had made me swear to ; and which she held me to, ' in order, I said, to induce me the sooner to be reconciled to her relations.'

' I owned, that this restraint made me sometimes ready to fly out.' And Mrs. Moore was so good as to declare, that she did not much wonder at it.

Thou art a very good sort of woman, Mrs. Moore, thought I.

As Miss Howe has actually detected our mother ; and might possibly find some way still to acquaint her friend with her discoveries ; I thought it proper to

repossess them in Mrs. Sinclair's favour ; and in that of her two nieces.

I said, ‘ They were gentlewomen born ; had not bad hearts ; that indeed my spouse did not love them ; they having once jointly taken the liberty to blame her for her over-niceness with regard to me. People, I said, even good people, who knew themselves to be guilty of a fault they had no inclination to mend, were too often least patient, when told of it ; as they could less bear than others, to be thought indifferently of.’

Too often the case, they owned.

‘ Mrs. Sinclair's house was a very handsome house, and fit to receive the first quality [True enough, Jack!] : Mrs. Sinclair was a woman very easy in her circumstances : A widow-gentlewoman—as you, Mrs. Moore, are. Lets lodgings—as you, Mrs. Moore, do. Once had better prospects—as you, Mrs. Moore, may have had : The relict of Colonel Sinclair : You, Mrs. Moore, might know Colonel Sinclair—He had lodgings at Hamstead.’

She had heard of the name.

‘ O, he was related to the best families in Scotland : And his widow is not to be reflected upon, because she lets lodgings, you know Mrs. Moore ; —You know, Miss Rawlins.’

Very true, and, Very true : And they must needs say, it did not look quite so pretty in such a lady as my spouse, to be so censorious.

A foundation here, thought I, to procure these womens help to get back the fugitive, or their connivance at least at my doing so ; as well as for anticipating any future information from Miss Howe.

I gave them a character of that virago : And intimated, ‘ that for a head to contrive mischief, and a heart to execute it, she had hardly her equal in her sex.’

To *this* Miss Howe it was, Mrs. Moore said, she supposed, that my spouse was so desirous to dispatch a man and horse, by day-dawn, with a letter she wrote before she went to bed last night ; proposing to stay no longer than till she had received an answer to it.

The very same, said I. I *knew* she would have immediate recourse to her. I should have been but too happy, could I have prevented such a letter from passing, or so to have managed, as to have it given into Mrs. Howe's hands, instead of her daughter's. Women who had lived some time in the world, knew *better*, than to encourage such skittish pranks in young wives.

Let me just stop to tell thee, while it is in my head, that I have since given Will. his cue to find out where the man lives who is gone with the fair fugitive's letter ; and, if possible, to see him on his return, before he sees her.

I told the women, ‘ That I despaired it would ever be better with us, while Miss Howe had so strange a predominance over my spouse, and remained herself *unmarried* ; and until the reconciliation with her friends could be effected ; or a *still* happier event,—as I should think it, who am the last male of my family ; and which my foolish vow, and her rigour, had hitherto ’—

Here I stopt, and looked modest, turning my diamond ring round my finger : While goody Moore looked mighty significant, calling it a very particular case ; and the maiden lady fann'd away, and primm'd and purs'd, to shew, that what I said needed no farther explanation.

‘ I told them the occasion of our present difference : Avowed the reality of the fire : But owned, that I would have made no scruple of breaking the unnatural oath she had bound me in (having an husband's right of my side), when she was so accidentally frightened into my arms : And I blamed my

‘ self excessively, that I did not ; since she thought fit
 ‘ to carry her resentment so high, and had the injustice
 ‘ to suppose the fire to be a contrivance of mine.’

Nay, for that matter, Mrs. Moore said—as we were married, and *Madam* was so odd—Every gentleman would not—And there stopt Mrs. Moore.

‘ To suppose I should have recourse to such a poor contrivance, said I, when I saw the dear creature every hour—’ Was not this a bold put, Jack ?

A most extraordinary case, truly ! the maiden lady : Fanning, yet coming in with her *Well-but's*, and her sifting *Pray-Sir's* !—And her restraining *Enough-Sir's* !—flying from the question to the question ; her seat now-and-then uneasy, for fear my want of delicacy should hurt her abundant modesty ; and yet it was difficult to satisfy her *super-abundant* curiosity.

‘ My beloved’s jealousy ; which of itself, to female minds, accounts for a thousand unaccountablenesses ; and the imputation of her half-phrensy brought upon her by her father’s wicked curse, and by the previous persecutions she had undergone from all her family ; were what I dwelt upon, in order to provide against what might happen.’

In short, ‘ I owned against myself most of the offences which I did not doubt but she would charge me with in their hearing : And as every cause has a black and a white side, I gave the worst parts of our story the gentlest turn. And when I had done, gave them some *partial* hints of the contents of Captain Tomlinson’s letter, which I had left with her : With a caution, to be guarded against the inquiries of James Harlowe, and of Captain Singleton, or of any sailor-looking men.’ This thou wilt see from the letter itself was necessary to be done. Here therefore thou mayest read it. And a charming letter to my purpose, if thou givest the least attention to its contents, wilt thou find it to be.

*To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;**Dear Sir,**WEDN. JUNE 7.*

ALTHO' I am obliged to be in town to-morrow, or next day at farthest, yet I would not dispense with writing to you, by one of my servants, (whom I send up before me upon a particular occasion) in order to advertise you, *that it is probable you will hear from some of your own relations on your [supposed*] nuptials.* One of the persons (Mr. Lilburne by name) to whom I hinted my belief of your marriage, happens to be acquainted with Mr. Spurrier, Lady Betty Lawrence's steward; and (not being under any restriction) mentioned it to Mr. Spurrier, and he to Lady Betty, as a thing certain: And this (tho' I have not the honour *to be personally known to her ladyship*) brought on an inquiry from her ladyship to me by her gentleman; who coming to me in company with Mr. Lilburne, I had no way but to confirm the report. And I understand, that Lady Betty takes it amiss, that she was not acquainted with so desirable a piece of news from yourself.

Her ladyship, it seems, has *business that calls her to town*; [and you will possibly choose to put her right. If you do, it will, I presume, *be in confidence*; that nothing may perspire from your *own* family to contradict what I have given out.]

[I have ever been of opinion, *That truth ought to be strictly adhered to on all occasions*: And am concerned that I have departed (tho' with so good a view) from my old maxim. But my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe would have it so. Yet I never knew a departure of this kind a *single* departure. But, to make the best of it now, allow me, Sir, once more to beg the lady, as soon as possible, to authenticate the report given out.] When you both join in the acknowledgement,

* What is between hooks [] thou mayest suppose, Jack, I sunk upon the women, in the account I gave them of the contents of this letter.

legement, it will be impertinent in any one to be inquisitive as to the *day or week*: [And, if as privately celebrated as you intend (while the gentlewomen with whom you lodge are properly instructed, as you say they are, and who actually believe you were married long ago), who shall be able to give a contradiction to my report?]

And yet it is very probable, that minute inquiries will be made; and this is what renders precaution necessary. For Mr. James Harlowe will not believe that you are married; and is sure, he says, that you both lived together when Mr. Hickman's application was made to Mr. John Harlowe: And if you lived together *any* time unmarried, he infers from *your* character, Mr. Lovelace, that it is not probable, that you would ever marry. And he leaves it to his two uncles to decide, if you even *should be* married, whether there be not room to believe, that his sister was first dishonoured; and if so, to judge of the title she will have to their favour, or to the forgiveness of any of her family. I believe, Sir, this part of my letter had best to be kept from the lady.

What makes young Mr. Harlowe the more earnest to find this out (and find it out he is resolved, and to come at his sister's speech too; and for that purpose sets out to-morrow, as I am well-informed, with a large attendance, armed, and Mr. Solmes is to be of the party) is this:—Mr. John Harlowe has told the whole family, that he will alter and new-settle his will. Mr. Antony Harlowe is resolved to do the same by his; for, it seems, he has now given over all thoughts of changing his condition; *having lately been disappointed in a view he had of that sort with Mrs. Howe.* These two brothers generally act in concert; and Mr. James Harlowe dreads (and let me tell you, that he has reason for it, on *my* Mr. Harlowe's account), that his younger sister will be, at last, more benefited than he wishes for, by the alteration

teration intended. He has already been endeavouring to find his uncle Harlowe on this subject ; and wanted to know whether any new application had been made to him on his sister's part. Mr. Harlowe avoided a direct answer, and expressed his wishes for a general reconciliation, and his hopes that his niece was married. This offended the furious young man, and he reminded his uncle of engagements they had all entered into at his sister's going away, *not to be reconciled but by general consent.*

Mr. John Harlowe complains to me often, of the uncontrollableness of his nephew ; and says, that now, that the young man has not any-body of whose superior sense he stands in awe, he observes not decency in his behaviour to any of them. And this makes *my* Mr. Harlowe still more desirous than ever of bringing his younger niece into favour again. I will not say all I might of this young man's extraordinary rapaciousness :—But one would think, *that these grasping men expect to live for ever !*

‘ I took the liberty but within these two hours, to propose to set on foot (and offer'd my cover) to a correspondence between *my friend, and his daughter-niece*, as he still sometimes fondly calls her. She was mistress of so much prudence, I said, that I was sure she could better direct every thing to its desirable end, than any-body else could. But he said, he did not think himself intirely at liberty to take such a step *at present* ; and that it was best that he should have it in his power to say, occasionally, that he had not any correspondence with her, or letter from her.

‘ You will see, Sir, from all this, the necessity of keeping our treaty an *absolute secret* ; and if the lady has mentioned it to her *worthy* friend Miss Howe, I hope it is in confidence.

[And now, Sir, a few lines in answer to yours of Monday last.]

[Mr,

[Mr. Harlowe was very well pleased with your readiness to come into his proposal. But as to what you *both* desire, that he will be present at the ceremony, he said, that his nephew watched all his steps so narrowly, that he thought it was not practicable (if he were inclinable) to oblige you: But that he consented with all his heart, that I should be the person privately present at the ceremony, on his part.]

[However, I think, I have an *expedient* for this, if your lady *continues* to be very desirous of her uncle's presence (except he should be more determined than his answer seemed to import); of which I shall acquaint you, and perhaps of what he says to it, when I have the pleasure to see you in town. But, indeed, I think you have no time to lose. Mr. Harlowe is impatient to hear, that you are actually one; and I hope I may carry him down word, when I leave you next, that I saw the ceremony performed.]

[If any obstacle arises from the lady (from *you* it cannot), I shall be tempted to think a little hardly of her punctilio.]

Mr. Harlowe hopes, Sir, that you will rather take pains to *avoid*, than to *meet*, this violent young man. He has the better opinion of you, let me tell you, Sir, from the account I gave him of your moderation and politeness; neither of which are qualities with his nephew. *But we have all of us something to amend.*

You cannot imagine how dearly my friend still loves this excellent niece of his—I will give you an instance of it, which affected me a good deal—*If once more* (said he, the last time but one we were together) *I can but see this sweet child gracing the upper-end of my table, as mistress of my house, in my allotted month*; all the rest of the family present *but as her guests*; for so I *would* have it; and had *her mother's consent for it*—There he stopt; for he was forced to turn his reverend face from me.

Tears

Tears ran down his cheeks. Fain would he have hid them : But he could not—‘ Yet,—yet, said he—how—how—’(poor gentleman, he perfectly sobbed)—‘ how shall I be able to bear the first meeting ! ’

I bless God I am *na hard-hearted man*, Mr. Lovelace : My eyes shewed to my worthy friend, that he had no reason to be ashamed of his humanity before me.

I will put an end to this long epistle. Be pleased to make my compliments acceptable to the most excellent of women ; as well as believe me to be,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful friend, and humble servant,

ANTONY TOMLINSON.

During the above conversation I had planted myself at the further end of the apartment we were in, over-against the door ; which was open ; and opposite to the lady’s chamber-door ; which was shut. I spoke so low, that it was impossible, at that distance, that she should hear what we said ; and in this situation I could see if her door opened.

I told the women, that what I had mentioned of Lady Betty’s and her niece’s coming to town, and of their intention to visit my spouse, whom they had never seen, nor she them, was real ; and that I expected news of their arrival every hour. I then shewed them copies of the other two letters, which I had left with her ; the one from lady Betty, the other from my cousin Montague.—And here thou mayest read them if thou wilt.

Eternally reproaching, eternally upbraiding me, are my impertinent relations. But they are fond of occasions to find fault with me. Their love, their love, Jack, and their dependence on my known good humour, their inducement !

To

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;.

Dear Nephew,

Wedn. Morn. June 7.

I Understand, that at length all our wishes are answered in your happy marriage. But I think, we might as well have heard of it directly from you, as from the round-about way by which we have been made acquainted with it. Methinks, Sir, the *power* and the *will* we have to oblige you, should not expose us the more to your flights and negligence. My brother had set his heart upon giving to you the wife we have all so long wished you to have. But if you were actually married at the time you made him that request (supposing, perhaps, that his gout, would not let him attend you), it is but like *you**.—If your lady had *her* reasons to wish it to be private while the differences between her family and self continue, you might nevertheless have communicated it to us, with *that* restriction; and we should have forborn the public manifestations of our joy, upon an event we have so long desired.

The distant way we have come to know it, is by my steward; who is acquainted with a friend of Captain Tomlinson, to whom that gentleman revealed it: And he, it seems, had it from yourself and lady, with such circumstances as leave it not to be doubted.

I am, indeed, very much disengaged with you: So is my sister Sadleir. But I shall have a very speedy opportunity to tell you so in person; being obliged to go to town on my old Chancery-affair. My cousin Leeson, who is, it seems, removed to Albemarle-street, has notice of it. I shall be at *her* house, where I bespeak your attendance on Sunday night. I have written to my cousin Charlotte for either her, or her sister, to meet me at Reading, and accompany me to town. I shall stay but a few days; my business being

* I gave the women room to think this reproach just, Jack.

being matter of form only : On my return I shall pop upon my brother, at M. Hall, to see in what way his last fit has left him.

Mean time, having told you my mind on your negligence, I cannot help congratulating you both upon the occasion : Your fair lady particularly, upon her entrance into a family, which is prepared to admire and love her.

My principal intention of writing to you (dispensing with the necessary punctilio) is, that you may acquaint my dear new niece, that I will not be denied the honour of her company down with me into Oxfordshire. I understand, that your proposed house and equipages cannot be soon ready. She shall be with me till they are. I insist upon it. This shall make all up. My house shall be her own : My servants and equipages hers.

Lady Sarah, who has not been out of her own house for months, will oblige me with her company for a week, in honour of a niece so dearly beloved, as I am sure she will be of us all.

Being but in lodgings in town, neither you nor your lady can require much preparation.

Some time on Monday I hope to attend the dear young lady, to make her my compliments ; and to receive *her* apology for *your* negligence : Which, and her going down with me, as I said before, shall be full satisfaction. Mean time, God bless *her* for her courage (Tell her I say so) : And bless you *both* in each other ; and that will be happiness to us all—particularly, to

Your truly affectionate Aunt,
ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;.

Dear Cousin,

AT last, as we understand, there is some hope of you. Now does my good Lord run over his bead-

bead-roll of proverbs ; of *Black oxen, Wild oats, Long lanes,* and so forth.

Now, cousin, say I, is your time come ; and you will be no longer, I hope, an infidel either to the power or excellence of the sex you have pretended hitherto so much to undervalue ; nor a ridiculer or scoffer at an institution which all sober people reverence, and all rakes, sooner or later, are brought to reverence, or to wish they had.

I want to see how you become your silken fitters : Whether the charming yoke fits light upon your shoulders. If, with such a sweet yoke-fellow it does not, my Lord, and my sister, as well as I, think, that you will deserve a closer tie about your neck.

His Lordship frets like gum'd taffaty, that you have not written him word of the day, the hour, the manner, and every thing. But I ask him, How he can already expect any mark of deference or politeness from you ? He must stay, I tell him, till that sign of reformation, among others, must appear from the influence and example of your lady : But that, if ever you will be good for any thing, it will be quickly seen. And Oh cousin, what a vast, vast, journey have you to take from the dreary land of Libertinism, thro' the bright province of Reformation, into the serene kingdom of Happiness ! — You had need to lose no time. You have many a weary step to tread, before you can overtake those travellers, who set out for it from a less remote quarter. But you have a charming pole-star to guide you, that's your advantage. I wish you joy of it : And as I have never yet expected any highly complaisant thing from you, I make no scruple to begin first ; but it is purely, I must tell you, in respect to my new cousin ; whose accession into our family we most heartily congratulate and rejoice in.

I have a letter from Lady Betty. She commands my attendance, or my sister's, at Reading, to proceed with

with her to the great beastly town, to cousin Leeson's. She puts Lord M. in hopes, that she shall certainly bring down with her our lovely new relation; for she says, she will not be denied. His Lordship is the willinger to let *me* be the person, as I am in a manner wild to see her; my sister having two years ago had that honour at Sir Robert Biddulph's. So get ready to accompany us in our return; except your lady has objections strong enough to satisfy us all. Lady Sarah longs to see her; and says, This accession to the family will supply to it the loss of her beloved daughter.

I shall soon, I hope, pay my compliments to the dear lady in person: So have nothing to add, but that, I am

Your old mad Playfellow and Cousin,

CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

The women having read the copies of these two letters, I thought that I might then threaten and swagger—‘ But very little heart have I, said I, to encourage such a visit from Lady Betty and Miss Montague to my spouse. For after all, I am tired out with her strange ways. She is not what she was, and (as I told her in your hearing, ladies) I will leave this plaguy island, tho’ the place of my birth, and tho’ the stake I have in it is very considerable; and go and reside in France or Italy, and never think of myself as a married man, nor live like one.’

O dear! said one.

That would be a sad thing! said the other.

Nay, Madam, turning to Mrs. Moore—Indeed, Madam, to Miss Rawlins—I am quite desperate. I can no longer bear such usage. I have had the good fortune to be favoured by the smiles of very fine ladies, tho’ I say it (and I looked modest), both abroad and at home—[Thou knowest this to be true, Jack]. With regard to my spouse here, I had but one hope left (for

(for as to the reconciliation with her friends, I scorn them all too much to value that, but for her sake); and that was, that if it pleased God to bless us with children, she might intirely recover her usual serenity; and we might then be happy. But the reconciliation her heart was so much set upon, is now, as I hinted before, intirely hopeless—Made so, by this rash step of hers, and by the rasher temper she is in; since (as you will believe) her brother and sister, when they come to know it, will make a fine handle of it against us both;—affecting, as they do at present, to disbelieve our marriage—and the dear creature herself too ready to countenance such a disbelief,—as nothing *more than the ceremony*—

Here I was bashful; for Miss Rawlins by her preparatory primness, put me in mind, that it was *proper to be so*—

I turned half round; then facing the fan-player, and the matron—You *yourselves*, ladies, knew not what to believe till *Now*, that I have told you our story: And I do assure you, that I shall not give myself the same trouble to convince people I hate: People from whom I neither expect nor desire any favour; and who are determined *not* to be convinced. And what, pray, must be the issue, when her uncle's friend comes, altho' he seems to be a *truly worthy man*? Is it not natural for him to say, ‘To what purpose, Mr. Lovelace, shou'd • I endeavour to bring about a reconciliation between • Mrs. Lovelace and her friends, by means of her • elder uncle, when a good understanding is wanting • between yourselves?’—A fair inference, Mrs. Moore!—A fair inference, Miss Rawlins!—And here is the unhappiness—Till she is reconciled to them, this cursed oath, in her notion, is binding!

The women seem'd moved; for I spoke with great earnestness, tho' low—And besides, they love to have their sex, and its favours, appear of importance to us. They shook their deep heads at each other,

and looked sorrowful : And this moved my tender heart too.

'Tis an unheard-of case, ladies—Had she not preferred me to all mankind—There I stopped—And that, resumed I, feeling for my handkerchief, is, what staggered Captain Tomlinson, when he heard of her flight ; who, the last time he saw us together, saw the most affectionate couple on earth !—The most affectionate couple on earth !—in the accent-grievous, repeated I.

Out then I pulled my handkerchief, and, putting it to my eyes, arose, and walked to the window—It makes me weaker than a woman !—Did I not love her, as never man loved *his wife* [I have no doubt but I do, Jack]—

There again I stopt ; and resuming—Charming creature, as you see she is, I wish I had never beheld her face !—Excuse me, ladies ; traversing the room. And having rubbed my eyes till I supposed them red, I turned to the women ; and, pulling out my letter-case, I will shew you one letter—Here it is—Read it, Miss Rawlins, if you please—It will confirm to you, how much all my family are prepared to admire her. I am freely treated in it ;—so I am in the two others : But after what I have told you, nothing need be a secret to you two.

She took it, with an air of eager curiosity, and looked at the seal, ostentatiously coronetted ; and at the superscription, reading out, *To Robert Lovelace, Esq;*— Ay, Madam—Ay, Miss—that's my name (giving myself an air, tho' I had told it to them before) I am not ashamed of it. My wife's maiden name—*Unmarried* name, I should rather say,—fool that I am !—and I rubbed my cheek for vexation [Fool enough in conscience, Jack!] was Harlowe—Clarissa Harlowe—You heard me call her *My Clarissa*.—

I did—but thought it to be a feigned or love-name, said Miss Rawlins. I

I wonder what is Miss Rawlins's love-name, Jack. Most of the fair Romancers have in their early womanhood chosen Love-names. No parson ever gave more *real* names, than I have given *fictitious* ones. And to very good purpose: Many a sweet dear has answered me a letter for the sake of owning a name which her godmother never gave her.

No—It was her real name, I said.

I bid her read out the whole letter. If the spelling be not exact, Miss Rawlins, said I, you will excuse it; the writer is a Lord. But, perhaps, I may not shew it to my spouse; for if those I have left with her have no effect upon her, neither will this: And I shall not care to expose my Lord M. to her scorn. Indeed I begin to be quite careless of consequences.

Miss Rawlins, who could not but be pleased with this mark of my confidence, looked as if she pitied me. And here thou mayest read the letter, No. III.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Cousin Lovelace,

M. Hall, Wedn. June 7.

I think you might have found time to let us know of your nuptials being actually solemnized. I might have expected this piece of civility from you. But perhaps the ceremony was performed at the very time that you asked me to be your lady's father—But I shall be angry if I proceed in my guesses—And little said is soon amended.

But I can tell you, that Lady Betty Lawrance, whatever Lady Sarah does, will not so soon forgive you, as I have done. *Women resent flights longer than men.* You that know so much of the sex (I speak it not however to your praise) might have known *That.* But never was you before acquainted with a lady of such an amiable character. I hope there will be but one soul between you. I have before now said, that I will disinherit

disinherit you, and settle all I can upon her, if you prove not a good husband to her.

May this marriage be crowned with a great many fine boys (I desire no girls) to build up again a family so antient ! The first boy shall take my surname by act of parliament. That is in my will.

Lady Betty and niece Charlotte will be in town about business *before you know where you are*. They long to pay their compliments to your fair bride. I suppose you will hardly be at the Lawn when they get to town ; because Greme informs me, you have sent no orders there for your lady's accommodation.

Pritchard has all things in readiness for signing. I will take no advantage of your flights. Indeed I am too much used to them—More praise to my patience, than to your complaisance, however.

One reason for Lady Betty's going up, as I may tell you *under the rose*, is, to buy some suitable presents for Lady Sarah and all of us to make on this agreeable occasion.

We would have blazed it away, could we have had timely notice, and thought it would have been agreeable to all round. The *like occasions don't happen every day*.

My most affectionate compliments and congratulations to my new niece, conclude me, for the present, in violent pains, that with all your heroicalness would make you mad,

Your truly affectionate Uncle,

M.

This letter clench'd the nail. Not but that, Miss Rawlins said, she saw I had been a wild gentleman ; and, truly, she thought so, the moment she beheld me.

They began to intercede for my spouse (so nicely had I turn'd the tables), and that I would not go abroad, and disappoint a reconciliation so much wished

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for on one side, and such desirable prospects on the other in my own family.

Who knows, thought I to myself, but more may come of this plot, than I had even promised myself? What a happy man shall I be, if these women can be brought to join to carry my marriage into consummation?

Ladies, you are exceeding good to us both. I should have some hopes, if my unhappily-nice spouse could be brought to dispense with the unnatural oath she has laid me under. You see what my case is. Do you think I may not insist upon her absolving me from this abominable oath? Will you be so good, as to give your advice, that one apartment may serve for a man and his wife at the hour of retirement? —Modestly put, Belford! —And let me here observe, that few rakes, besides me, would find a language so decent, as to engage modest women to talk with him in, upon such subjects.

They both simper'd, and look'd upon one another.

These subjects always make women simper, at least. No *need* but of the most delicate hints to them. A man who is gross in a woman's company, ought to be knock'd down with a club: For, like so many musical instruments, touch but a single wire, and the dear souls are sensible all over.

To be sure, Miss Rawlins learnedly said, playing with her fan, a casuist would give it, that the matrimonial vow ought to supersede any other obligation.

Mrs. Moore, for her part, was of opinion, that, if the lady owned herself to be a wife, she ought to behave *like* one.

Whatever be my luck, thought I, with this *all-eyed* fair one, any other woman in the world, from fifteen to five-and-twenty, would be mine upon my own terms before the morning.

And now, that I may be at hand to take all advantages,

Miss Clarissa Harlowe. st

vantages, I will endeavour, said I to myself, to make sure of good quarters.

I am your lodger, Mrs. Moore, in virtue of the earnest I have given you, for these apartments, and for any one you can spare above for my servants; Indeed for *all* you have to spare—for who knows what my spouse's brother may attempt? I will pay you your own demand: and that for a month or two certain (board included), as I shall or shall not be your hindrance. Take *that* as a pledge; or in part of payment.—Offering her a thirty pound bank note.

She declined taking it; desiring she might consult the lady first; adding, that she doubted not my honour; and that she would not lett her apartments to any other person, whom she knew not something of, while I and the lady were here.

The lady, The lady! from both the womens mouths continually (which still implied a doubt in their hearts): And not *Your spouse*, and *Your lady, Sir.*

I never met with such women, thought I;—So thoroughly convinced but this moment, yet already doubting! I am afraid I have a couple of Sceptics to deal with.

I knew no reason, I said, for my wife to object to my lodging in the same house with her here, any more than in town, at Mrs. Sinclair's. But were she to make such objection, I would not quit possession; since it was not unlikely, that the same freakish disorder which brought her to Hamstead, might carry her absolutely out of my knowlege.

They both seemed embarrassed; and looked upon one another; yet with such an air, as if they thought there was reason in what I said. And I declared myself her boarder, as well as lodger; and, dinner-time approaching, was not denied to be the former.

LETTER III.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

I Thought it was now high time to turn my whole mind to my beloved ; who had had full leisure to weigh the contents of the letters I had left with her.

I therefore requested Mrs. Moore to step in, and desire to know, whether she would be pleased to admit me to attend her in her apartment, on occasion of the letters I had left with her ; or whether she would favour me with her company in the dining-room ?

Mrs. Moore desired Miss Rawlins to accompany her in to the lady. They tapp'd at her door, and were both admitted.

I cannot but stop here for one minute, to remark, tho' against myself, upon that security which innocence gives, that nevertheless had better have in it a greater mixture of the Serpent with the Dove. For here, heedless of all I could say behind her back, because she was satisfied with her own worthiness, she permitted me to go on with my own story, without interruption, to persons as great strangers to her as to me ; and who, as strangers to *both*, might be supposed to lean to the side most injured : And that, as I managed it, was to mine. A dear silly soul ! thought I, at the time, to depend upon the goodness of her own heart, when the heart cannot be seen into but by its actions ; and she, to appearance, a runaway, an eloper, from a tender, a most indulgent husband !—To neglect to cultivate the opinion of individuals, when the whole world is governed by appearance !

Yet, what can be expected of an angel under twenty ?—She has a world of knowledge ; knowledge speculative, as I may say ; but no *experience* ! How should she ?—Knowledge by theory only is a vague uncertain

certain light : A Will o' the Wisp, which as often misleads the doubting mind, as puts it right.

There are many things in the world, could a moralizer say, that would afford inexpressible pleasure to a reflecting mind, were it not for the mixture they come to us with. To be graver still ; I have seen parents (perhaps my own did so) who delighted in those very qualities in their children, while young, the natural consequences of which (too much indulged and encouraged) made them, as they grew up, the plague of their hearts.—To bring this home to my present purpose, I must tell thee, that I adore this charming creature for her vigilant prudence ; but yet, I would not, methinks, wish her, by virtue of that prudence, which is, however, necessary to carry her above the *devices* of all the rest of the world, to be too wise for *mine*.

My revenge, my *sworn* revenge, is nevertheless (adore her as I will) uppermost in my heart !—Miss Howe says, that my Love is an *Herodian* Love (*a*) : By my soul, that girl's a witch !—I am half sorry to say, that I find a pleasure in playing the tyrant over what I love. Call it an ungenerous pleasure, if thou wilt : Softer hearts than mine know it. The women to a woman know it, and *shew* it too, whenever they are trusted with power. And why should it be thought strange, that I, who love them so dearly, and study them so much, should catch the infection of them ?

LETTER IV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

I Will now give thee the substance of the dialogue that passed between the two women and the lady.

Wonder not, that a perverse wife makes a listening husband. The event, however, as thou wilt

D 3

find,

(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 340.

find, justified the old observation, *That listeners seldom hear good of themselves.* Conscious of their own demerits (if I may guess by myself: There's ingenuity, Jack!), and fearful of censure, they seldom find themselves disappointed. There is something of sense, after all, in these proverbs, in these phrases, in this *wisdom of nations.*

Mrs. Moore was to be the messenger; but Miss Rawlins began the dialogue.

Your Spouse, Madam — [Devil! — Only to fish for a negative or affirmative declaration.]

C1. My spouse, Madam —

Miss R. Mr. Lovelace, Madam, avers, that you are married to him; and begs admittance, or your company in the dining-room, to talk upon the subject of the letters he left with you.

C1. He is a poor wicked wretch. Let me beg of you, Madam, to favour me with your company as often as possible while he is hereabouts, and I remain here.

Miss R. I shall with pleasure attend you, Madam. But, methinks, I could wish you would see the gentleman, and hear what he has to say, on the subject of the letters.

C1. My case is a hard, a very hard one—I am quite bewilder'd! — I know not what to do! — I have not a friend in the world, that can or will help me! — Yet had none but friends till I knew *that man!*

Miss R. The gentleman neither looks nor talks like a bad man.—Not a *very* bad man; as men go.

As men go! — Poor Miss Rawlins, thought I! — And dost thou know, *how men go?*

C1. O Madam, you know him not! — He can put on the appearance of an angel of light; but has a black, a very black heart! —

Poor I! —

Miss R. I could not have thought it, truly! — But men are very deceitful now-a-days!

Now-

Now-a-days! — a fool! — Have not her history-books told her, that they were always so?

Mrs. Moore, sighing. I have found it so, I am sure, to my cost! —

Who knows but in her time, poor goody Moore may have met with a Lovelace, or a Belford, or some such vile fellow? — My little hare-um-scare-um Beauty knows not what strange histories every woman living, who has had the least independence of will, could tell her, were such to be as communicative as she is. — But here's the thing; — I have given her cause enough of offence; but not enough to make her hold her tongue.

Cl. As to the letters he has left with me, I know not what to say to *them*: — But am resolved never to have any thing to say to *him*.

Miss R. If, Madam, I may be allowed to say so, I think you carry matters very far.

Cl. Has he been making a bad cause a good one with you, Madam? — *That* he can do, with those who know him not. Indeed I heard him talking, tho' not what he said, and am indifferent about it. But what account does he give of himself?

I was pleased to hear this. To arrest, to stop her passion, thought I, in the height of its career, is a charming presage.

Then the busy Miss Rawlins fish'd on, to find out from her either a *confirmation* or *disavowal* of my story. Was Lord M. my uncle? — Did I court her at first with the allowance of her friends, her brother excepted? Had I a rencounter with that brother? Was she so persecuted in favour of a very disagreeable man, one Solmes, as to induce her to throw herself into my protection?

None of these were denied. All the objections she *could* have made, were stifled, or kept in, by the consideration (as she mentioned) that she should stay there but a little while; and that her story was too

long. But Miss Rawlins would not be thus easily answered.

Miss R. He says, Madam, that he could not prevail for marriage, till he had consented, under a solemn oath, to separate beds, while your family remain'd unreconciled.

CJ. O the wretch!—What can be still in his head, to endeavour to pass these stories upon strangers!

So no direct denial, thought I!—Admirable!—All will do by-and-by!

Miss R. He has owned, that an accidental fire had frighten'd you very much on Wednesday night—And that—And that—And that—an accidental fire had frighten'd you—Very much frighten'd you—last Wednesday night!—

Then, after a short pause—In short, He owned, That he had taken some innocent liberties, which might have led to a breach of the oath you had imposed upon him: And that This was the cause of your displeasure.

I would have been glad to see how my charmer then look'd.—To be sure she was at a loss in her own mind, to justify herself for resenting so highly an offence so trifling. She hesitated—Did not presently speak—When she did, she wish'd, That she, Miss Rawlins, might never meet with any man who would take such innocent liberties with *her*.

Miss Rawlins push'd further.

Your case, to be sure, Madam, is very particular. But if the hope of a reconciliation with your own friends is made more distant by your leaving him, give me leave to say, That 'tis pity—'tis pity— [I suppose the maiden then primm'd, fann'd, and blush'd; — 'tis pity] the oath cannot be dispensed with; especially as he owns, he has not been so strict a liver.—

I could have gone in, and kiss'd the girl.

CJ.

Cl. You have heard *his* story. Mine, as I told you before, is too long, and too melancholy; my disorder on seeing the wretch is too great; and my time here is too short, for me to enter upon it. And if he has any end to serve by his own vindication, in which I shall not be a *personal* sufferer, let him make himself appear as white as an angel; with all my heart.

My love for her, and the excellent character I gave her, were then pleaded.

Cl. Specious seducer!—Only tell me, if I cannot get away from him by some backway?

How my heart then went *pit-a-pat*!

Cl. Let me look out—[I heard the sash lifted up] Whither does that path lead to? Is there no possibility of getting to a coach?—Surely, he must deal with some fiend, or how could he have found me out?— Cannot I steal to some neighbouring house, where I may be concealed till I can get quite away?—You are good people!—I have not been always among such!—O help me, help me, ladies (with a voice of impatience), or I am ruined!

Then pausing, Is that the way to Hendon? [pointing, I suppose]—Is Hendon a private place?—The Hamstead coach, I am told, will carry passengers thither.

Mrs. Moore. I have an honest friend at Mill-hill [Devil fetch her, thought I]; where, if such be your determination, Madam, and if you think yourself in danger, you may be safe, I believe.

Cl. Any-whither, if I can but escape from *this man*!—Whither does that path lead to, out yonder?—What is that town on the right-hand called?

Mrs. M. Highgate, Madam.

Miss R. On the side of the heath is a little village called North-end. A kinswoman of mine lives there. But her house is small. I am not sure she could accommodate such a lady.

Devil take her too, thought I!—I imagined, that

I had made myself a better interest in these women.
But the whole Sex love plotting ; and plot-*ters*, too,
Jack,

Ci. A barn, an outhouse, a garret, will be a pa-
lace to me, if it will but afford me a refuge from
this man ! —

Her senses, thought I, are much livelier than *mine*.
What a devil have I done, that she should be so *very*
implacable ! — I told thee, Belford, All I did : Was
there any thing in it so *very* much amiss ! — Such
prospects of family-reconciliation before her too ! —
To be sure she is a very *sensible* lady ! —

She then espied my new servant walking under the
window, and asked, If he were not one of mine ? —

Will was on the look-out for old Grimes [So is
the fellow called whom my beloved has dispatch'd to
Miss Howe]. And being told, that the man she
saw *was* my servant ; I see, said she, that there
is no escaping, unless you, Madam [To Miss
Rawlins, I suppose], can befriend me till I can get
farther. I have no doubt that that fellow is planted
about the house to watch my steps. But the wicked
wretch his master has no right to controul me. He
shall not hinder me from going whither I please. I
will raise the town upon him, if he molests me. Dear
ladies, is there no back-door for me to get out at
while you hold him in talk ?

Miss R. Give me leave to ask you, Madam ; Is
there no room to hope for accommodation ? Had
you not better see him ? He certainly loves you
dearly : He is a fine gentleman : You may exasperate
him, and make matters more unhappy for yourself.

Ci. O Mrs. Moore, O Miss Rawlins ! you know
not the man ! — I wish not to see his face, nor to ex-
change another word with him as long as I live.

Mrs. Moore. I don't find, Miss Rawlins, that the
gentleman has misrepresented any-thing. You see,
Madam [To my Clarissa], how respectful he is ; not

to come in till permitted. He certainly loves you dearly. Pray, Madam, let him talk to you, as he wishes to do, on the subject of the letters.

Very kind of Mrs. Moore. Mrs. Moore, thought I, is a very good woman.—I did not curse her then.

Miss Rawlins said something; but so low, that I could not hear what it was. Thus it was answer'd.

Cl. I am greatly distressed! I know not what to do!—But, Mrs. Moore, be so good as to give his letters to him—Here they are.—Be pleased to tell him, That I wish him and his aunt and cousin a happy meeting. He never can want excuses to them for what has happened, any more than pretences to those he would delude. Tell him, That he has ruined me in the opinion of my own friends. I am for that reason the less solicitous how I appear to his.

Mrs. Moore then came to me; and being afraid, that something would pass mean time between the other two, which I should not like, I took the letters, and entered the room, and found them retired into the closet; my beloved whispering with an air of earnestness to Miss Rawlins, who was all attention.

Her back was towards me; and Miss Rawlins, by pulling her sleeve, giving intimation of my being there, Can I have no retirement uninvaded, Sir, said she, with indignation, as if she was interrupted in some talk her heart was in?—What business have you here, or with me?—You have your letters, han't you?

Lovel. I have, my dear; and let me beg of you to consider what you are about. I every moment expect Capt. Tomlinson here. Upon my soul, I do. He has promised to keep from your uncle what has happened.—But what will he think, if he finds you hold in this strange humour?

Cl. I will endeavour, Sir, to have patience with you for a moment or two, while I ask you a few

questions before this lady and Mrs. Moore [who just then came in], both whom you have prejudiced in your favour by your specious stories :—Will you say, Sir, that we are married together ? Lay your hand upon your heart, and answer me, Am I your wedded wife ?

I am gone too far, thought I, to give up for such a push as this—home-one as it is.

My dearest soul ! how can you put such a question ?—Is it either for *your* honour or *my own*, that it should be doubted ?—Surely, surely, Madam, you cannot have attended to the contents of Capt. Tomlinson's letter.

She complained often of want of spirits throughout our whole contention, and of weakness of person and mind, from the fits she had been thrown into : But little reason had *she* for this complaint, as I thought, who was able to hold me to it, as she did. I own that I was excessively concern'd for her several times.

You and I ! *Vilest of men*—

My name is Lovelace, Madam—

Therefore it is, that I call you the *vilest of men*. [Was this pardonable, Jack ?] You and I know the truth, the *whole truth*—I want not to clear up my reputation with these gentlewomen :—That is already lost with every one I had most reason to value : But let me have this *new* specimen of what you are capable of—Say, wretch (say, Lovelace, if thou hadst rather), Art thou really and truly my wedded husband ?—Say ! answer without hesitation !—

She trembled with impatient indignation ; but had a wildness in her manner, which I took some advantage of, in order to parry this cursed thrust—And a cursed thrust it was ; since, had I positively averr'd it, she never would have believed any-thing I had said : And had I owned that I was not married, I had destroyed my own plot, as well with the women as with her ; and could

could have had no pretence for pursuing her, or hindering her from going whithersoever she pleased. Not that I was ashame'd to averr it, had it been consistent with policy. I would not have thee think me such a milk-sop neither.

Lovel. My dearest Love, how wildly you talk ! What would you *have* me answer ? Is it necessary that I *should* answer ? May I not re-appeal this to your own breast, as well as to Captain Tomlinson's treaty and letter ? You know yourself how matters stand between us.—And Captain Tomlinson—

Cl. O wretch ! Is this an answer to my question ? Say, Are we married, or are we not ?

Lovel. What makes a marriage, we all know. If it be the union of two hearts, [There was a turn, Jack!] to my utmost grief, I must say we are *not* ; since now I see you hate me. If it be the completion of marriage, to my confusion and regret, I must own we are *not*. But, my dear, will you be pleased to consider what answer half a dozen people whence you came, could give to your question ? And do not now, in the disorder of your mind, and in the height of passion, bring into question before these gentle-women a point you have acknowledg'd before those who know us better.

I would have whisper'd her about the treaty with her uncle, and the contents of the Captain's letter ; But, retreating, and with a rejecting hand, Keep thy distance, *man*, cry'd the dear insolent—To thy own heart I appeal, since thou evadest me thus pitifully !—I own no marriage with thee ! Bear witness, ladies, I do not. And cease to torment me, cease to follow me. Surely, surely, faulty as I have been, I have not deserved to be *thus* persecuted !—I resume, therefore, my former language : You have no right to pursue me : You *know* you have not : Begone, then ; and leave me to make the best of my hard lot. O my dear cruel papa ! said she, in a violent fit

fit of grief (falling upon her knees, and clasping her uplifted hands together), thy heavy curse is completed upon thy devoted daughter ! I am *punished*, dreadfully punished, by the very wretch in whom I had placed my wicked confidence !

By my soul, Belford, the little witch with her words, but more by her manner, moved me ! Wonder not then, that her action, her grief, her tears, set the women into the like compassionate manifestations.

Had not I a cursed task of it ?

The two women withdrew to the further end of the room, and whisper'd, A strange case ! There is no frenzy here—I just heard said.

The charming creature threw her handkerchief over her head and neck, continuing kneeling, her back towards me, and her face hid upon a chair, and repeatedly sobb'd with grief and passion.

I took this opportunity to step to the women, to keep them steady.

You see, ladies (whispering), what an unhappy man I am ! You see what a spirit this dear creature has !—All, all owing to her implacable relations, and to her father's curse.—A curse upon them all ; they have turn'd the head of the most charming woman in the world.

Ah ! Sir, Sir, replied Miss Rawlins, whatever be the fault of her relations, all is not as it should be between you and her. 'Tis plain she does not think herself married : 'Tis plain she does not : And if you have any value for the poor lady, and would not totally deprive her of her senses, you had better withdraw, and leave to time and cooler consideration the event in your favour.

She will compel me to this at last, I fear, Miss Rawlins ; I fear she will ; and then we are both undone : For I cannot live without her ; she knows it too well :—And she has not a friend will look upon her ;

her : This also she knows. Our marriage, when her uncle's friend comes, will be proved incontestably. But I am ashamed to think I have given her room to believe it no marriage : That's what she harps upon !

Well, 'tis a strange case, a very strange one, said Miss Rawlins ; and was going to say further, when the angry Beauty, coming towards the door, said, Mrs. Moore, I beg a word with you. And they both stepped into the dining-room.

I saw her, just before, put a parcel into her pocket, and followed them out, for fear she should slip away ; and stepping to the stairs, that she *might not go by me*, Will, cry'd I, aloud (tho' I knew he was not near)—Pray, child, to a maid, who answered, call either of my servants to me.

She then came up to me, with a wrathful countenance : Do you call your servant, Sir, to hinder me, between you, from going whither I please ?

Don't, my dearest life, misinterpret every thing I do. Can you think me so mean and so unworthy, as to employ a servant to constrain you ?—I call him to send to the public houses, or inns in this town, to inquire after Captain Tomlinson, who may have alighted at some one of them, and be now, perhaps, needlessly adjusting his dress ; and I would have him come, were he to be without cloaths, God forgive me ! for I am stabb'd to the heart by your cruelty.

Answer was returned, that neither of my servants was in the way.

Not in the way, said I !—Whither can the dogs be gone ?

O Sir ! with a scornful air ; Not far, I'll warrant. One of them was under the window just now ; according to order, I suppose, to watch my steps—But I will do what I please, and go whither I please ; and that to your face.

God

God forbid, that I should hinder you in any thing that you may do with safety to yourself!

Now I verily believe, that her design was, to slip out in pursuance of the closet-whispering between her and Miss Rawlins ; perhaps to Miss Rawlins's house.

She then stept back to Mrs. Moore, and gave her something, which proved to be a diamond ring, and desired her, not whisperingly, but with an air of defiance to me, that That might be a pledge for her, till she defray'd her demands ; which she should soon find means to do ; having no more money about her, than she might have occasion for, before she came to an acquaintance's.

Mrs. Moore would have declined taking it ; but she would not be deny'd ; and then, wiping her eyes, she put on her gloves—Nobody has a right to stop me, said she !—I *will* go !—Who should I be afraid of ?—Her very question, charming creature ! testifying her fear.

I beg pardon, Madam (turning to Mrs. Moore, and courtesying), for the trouble I have given you.—I beg pardon, Madam, to Miss Rawlins (courtesying likewise to her)—You may both hear of me in a happier hour, if such a one falls to my lot—And God bless you both !—struggling with her tears till she sobb'd—and away was tripping.

I stepped to the door : I put it to ; and setting my back against it, took her struggling hand—My dearest life ! My angel ! said I, why will you thus distress me ?—Is this the forgiveness which you so solemnly promised ?—

Unhand me, Sir !—You have no busines with me ! You have no right over me ! You *know* you have not.

But whither, whither, my dearest love, would you go ?—Think you not that I will follow you, were it to the world's end ?—Whither would you go ?

Well do you ask me, Whither I would go, who have

have been the occasion, that I have not a friend left! —But God, who knows my innocence, and my upright intentions, will not wholly abandon me, when I am out of your power—But while in it, I cannot expect a gleam of the divine grace or favour to reach me.

How severe is this!—How shockingly severe!—Out of *your* presence, my angry fair one! I can neither hope for the one nor the other. As my cousin Montague, in the letter you have read, observes, You are my pole-star, and my guide; and if ever I am to be happy, either here or hereafter, it must be in and by you.

She would then have urged me from the door. But respectfully opposing her, Begone, man! Begone, Mr. Lovelace, said she.—Stop not my way.—If you would not that I should attempt the window, give me passage by the door; for, once more, you have no right to detain me!

Your resentments, my dearest life, I will own to be well-grounded—I will acknowlege, that I have been all in fault. On my knee (and down I dropt) I ask your pardon. And can you refuse to ratify your own *promise*?—Look forward to the happy prospect before us. See you not my Lord M. and Lady Sarah longing to bleſs *you*, for bleſſing me, and their whole family? Can you take no pleasure in the promised visit of Lady Betty and my cousin Montague? And in the protection they offer you, if you are dissatisfied with *mine*?—Have you no wish to see your uncle's friend?—Stay only till Captain Tomlinſon comes.—Receive from him the news of your uncle's compliance with the wishes of both.

She seem'd altogether distressed; was ready to sink; and forced to lean against the wainscot, as I kneeled at her feet. A stream of tears at laſt burst from her less indignant eyes—Good heaven, said she, lifting up her lovely face, and clasped hands, what is

at last to be my destiny!—Deliver me from this dangerous man; and direct me!—I know not what I do; what I can do; nor what I ought to do!—

The women, as I had owned our marriage to be but half completed, heard nothing in this whole scene to contradict (not flagrantly to contradict) what I had asserted: They believed they saw in her returning temper, and stagger'd resolution, a love for me, which her indignation had before suppressed; and they joined to persuade her to tarry till the Captain came, and to hear his proposals; representing the dangers to which she would be exposed; the fatigues she might endure; a lady of her appearance, unguarded, unprotected. On the other hand, they dwelt upon my declared contrition, and on my promises: For the performance of which they offered to be bound.—So much had my kneeling humility affected them.

Women, Jack, tacitly acknowlege the inferiority of their own sex, in the pride they take to behold a kneeling lover at their feet.

She turned from me, and threw herself into a chair.

I arose, and approached her with reverence—My dearest creature, said I—and was proceeding—But, with a face glowing with conscious dignity, she interrupted me—Ungenerous, ungrateful Lovelace!—You know not the value of the heart you have insulted! Nor can you conceive how much my soul despises your meanness. But meanness must ever be the portion of the man, who can act vilely!—

The women believing we were likely to be on better terms, retired. The dear perverse opposed their going; but they saw I was desirous of their absence. And when they had withdrawn, I once more threw myself at her feet, and acknowledg'd my offences; implored her forgiveness for this one time, and promised the exactest circumspection for the future.

It was impossible for her, she said, to keep her memory, and forgive me. What hadst thou seen in the conduct of Clarissa Harlowe, that should encourage such an insult upon her, as thou didst dare to make? How meanly must thou think of her, that thou couldst presume to be so guilty, and expect her to be so weak, as to forgive thee?—

I besought her to let me go over with her Captain Tomlinson's letter. I was sure it was impossible she could have given it the requisite attention.

I have given it the requisite attention, said she ; and the other letters too. So that what I say, is upon deliberation. And what have I to fear from my brother and sister?—They can but complete the ruin of my fortunes with my father and uncles. Let them, and welcome. You, Sir, I thank you, have lowered my fortunes : But, I bless God, that my mind is not sunk with my fortunes. It is, on the contrary, raised above Fortune, and above You ; and for half a word, they shall have the estate they have envied me for, and an acquittal of all expectations from my family, that may make them uneasy.

I lifted up my hands and eyes in silent admiration of her !

My brother, Sir, may think me ruined. To the praise of your character, by whom I have been seduced from them, he may think it impossible to be with you, and be innocent. You have but too well justified their harshest censures in every part of your conduct. But I will, now that I have escaped from you, and that I am out of the reach of your mysterious devices, wrap myself up in my own innocence (and then she passionately folded her arms about herself), and leave to time, and to my future circumspection, the re-establishment of my character.—Leave me then, Sir—Pursue me not!—

Good God ! interrupting her—And all this, for what?—Had I not yielded to your intreaties (Forget give

give me, Madam), you could not have carried farther your resentments —

Wretch! — Was it not crime enough to give occasion for those *intreaties*? Wouldst thou make a merit to me, that thou didst not utterly ruin her whom thou oughtest to have protected? — Begone, man! turning from me, her face crimson'd over with passion: — See me no more! — I cannot bear thee in my sight! —

Dearest, dearest creature! —

If I forgive thee, Lovelace — And there she stopp'd. To endeavour, proceeded she, to endeavour, to terrify a poor creature by *premeditation*, by *low contrivance*, by *cries of fire* — A poor creature who had consented to take a wretched chance with thee for life!

For Heaven's sake — offering to take her repulsing hand, as she was flying from me towards the closet —

What hast thou to do, to plead the sake of Heaven in thy favour, O darkest of human minds!

Then turning from me, wiping her eyes, and again turning towards me, but her sweet face half-a-side, What difficulties hast thou involved me in! — Thou that hadst a plain path before thee, after thou hadst betray'd me into thy power — At once my mind takes in the whole of thy crooked behaviour; and if thou thinkest of Clarissa Harlowe as her proud heart tells her thou oughtest to think of her, thou wilt seek thy fortunes elsewhere. How often hast thou provoked me to tell thee, that my soul is above thee?

For God's sake, Madam, for a soul's sake, which it is in your power to save from perdition, forgive me the past offence. I am the greatest villain on earth, if it was a premeditated one. Yet I presume not to excuse myself. On your mercy I throw myself. I will not offer at any plea, but that of penitence. See but Captain Tomlinson. See but my aunt and cousin; let them plead for me; let them be guaranties for my honour.

If Captain Tomlinson come while I stay here, I may see him. But as for you, Sir—

Dearest creature! let me beg of you not to aggravate my offence to the Captain, when he comes. Let me beg of you—

What askest thou?—Is it not, that I shall be of party against myself?—That I shall palliate—

Do not charge me, Madam, interrupted I, with villainous premeditation!—Do not give such a construction to my offence, as may weaken your uncle's opinion—as may strengthen your brother's—

She flung from me to the further end of the room; *She could go no further*—And just then Mrs. Moore came up, and told her, that dinner was ready; and that she had prevailed upon Miss Rawlins to give her company.

You must excuse me, Mrs. Moore, said she. Miss Rawlins I hope also will—but I cannot eat. I cannot go down. As for you, Sir, I suppose you will think it right to depart hence; at least till the gentleman comes whom you expect.

I respectfully withdrew into the next room, that Mrs. Moore might acquaint her [I durst not myself], that I was her lodger and boarder, as (whisperingly) I desired she would: And meeting Miss Rawlins in the passage, Dearest Miss Rawlins, said I, stand my friend: Join with Mrs. Moore to pacify my spouse, if she has any new flights upon my having taken lodgings, and intending to board here. I hope she will have more generosity than to think of hindering a gentlewoman from letting her lodgings.

I suppose Mrs. Moore (whom I left with my fair one) had apprised her of this before Miss Rawlins went in; for I heard her say, while I with-held Miss Rawlins—‘ No, indeed: He is much mistaken—‘ Surely he does not think I will.’

They both expostulated with her, as I could gather from bits and scraps of what they said; for they spoke

spoke so low, that I could not hear any distinct sentence, but from the fair perverse, whose anger made her louder. And to this purpose I heard her deliver herself in answer to different parts of their talk to her:

- ‘ Good Mrs. Moore, dear Miss Rawlins, pres me
- ‘ no further—I cannot sit down at table with him !’
- ‘ They said something, as I suppose in my behalf—
- ‘ O the insinuating wretch !—What defence have I
- ‘ against a man, who, go where I will, can turn
- ‘ every one, even of the virtuous of my sex, in his
- ‘ favour ? ’

After something else said, which I heard not distinctly,—‘ This is execrable cunning !—Were you

- ‘ to know his wicked heart, he is not without hope
- ‘ of engaging you two good persons to second him
- ‘ in the vilest of his machinations.’

How came she (thought I at the instant) by all this penetration ? My devil surely does not play me booty. If I thought he did, I would marry, and live honest, to be even with him.

I suppose then, they urged the plea which I hinted to Miss Rawlins at going in, that she would not be Mrs. Moore’s hindrance ; for thus she expressed herself—‘ He will no doubt pay you your own price.

- ‘ You need not question his liberality. But one
- ‘ house cannot hold us. Why, if it would, did I
- ‘ fly from him, to seek refuge among strangers ? ’

Then, in answer to somewhat else they pleaded—

- ‘ ’Tis a mistake, Madam ; I am *not* reconciled to
- ‘ him. I will believe nothing he says. Has he not
- ‘ given you a flagrant specimen of what a man he is,
- ‘ and of what he is capable, by the disguises you saw
- ‘ him in ? My story is too long, and my stay here
- ‘ will be but short ; or I could convince you, that
- ‘ my resentments against him are but too well
- ‘ founded.’

I suppose then, that they pleaded for *her* leave, for my dining with them : For she said ; ‘ I have nothing

‘ to

Miss Clarissa Harlowe. 71

‘ to say to that—It is your own house, Mrs. Moore—
‘ It is your own table — You may admit whom you
‘ please to it—Only leave me at my liberty to choose
‘ my company.’

Then in answer, as I suppose, to their offer of sending her up a plate—‘ A bit of bread, if you please,
‘ and a glass of water : That’s all I can swallow at present. I am really very much discomposed. Saw you not how bad I was ?—Indignation only could have supported my spirits !’—

‘ I have no objection to his dining with you, Madam,’ added she, in reply, I suppose, to a farther question of the same nature—‘ But I will not stay a night in the house, where he lodges, if I can help it.’

I presume Miss Rawlins had told her, that she would not stay dinner—for she said, ‘ Let me not deprive Mrs. Moore of your company, Miss Rawlins. You will not be displeased with his talk. He can have no design upon you.’

Then I suppose they pleaded what I might say behind her back, to make my own story good ;—‘ I care not what he says, or what he thinks of me. Repentance and amendment are all the harm I wish him, whatever becomes of me !’

By her accent, she wept when she spoke these last words.

They came out both of them wiping their eyes ; and would have persuaded me to relinquish the lodgings, and to depart till her uncle’s friend came. But I knew better. I did not care to trust the devil, well as she and Miss Howe suppose me to be acquainted with him, for finding her out again, if once more she escaped me.

What I am most afraid of, is, that she will throw herself among her own relations ; and if she does, I am confident they will not be able to withstand her affecting eloquence. But yet, as thou’lt see, the Captain’s letter to me is admirably calculated to ob-

viate my apprehensions on this score ; particularly in that passage, where it is said, that her uncle thinks not himself at liberty to correspond directly with her, or to receive applications from her—*But thro' Captain Tomlinson*, as is strongly imply'd (a).

I must own (notwithstanding the revenge I have so solemnly vowed) that I would very fain have made for her a merit with myself *in her returning favour*, and owed as little as possible to the mediation of Captain Tomlinson. My pride was concerned in this. And this was one of my reasons for not bringing him with me. Another was ; That, if I were obliged to have recourse to his assistance, I should be better able (by visiting her without him) to direct him what to say or to do, as I should find out the turn of her humour.

I was, however, glad at my heart, that Mrs. Moore came up so seasonably with notice, that dinner was ready. The fair fugitive was all in Alt. She had the game in her own hands ; and by giving me so good an excuse for withdrawing, I had time to strengthen myself ; the Captain had time to come ; and the Lady to cool. Shakespeare advises well.

*Oppose not rage, while rage is in its force ;
But give it way awhile, and let it waste.
The rising deluge is not stopt with dams ;
Those it o'erbears, and drowns the hope of harvest.
But, wisely manag'd, its divided strength
Is stui'd in channels, and securely drain'd :
And when its force is spent, and unsupply'd,
The residue with mounds may be restrain'd,
And dry-shod we may pass the naked ford.*

I went down with the women to dinner. Mrs. Moore sent her fair boarder up a plate ; but she only eat a little bit of bread, and drank a glass of water. I doubted not but she would keep her word, when it

(a) See p. 39. of this Volume.

was once gone out. Is not she an Harlowe?—She seems to be inuring herself to hardships, which, at the worst, she can never know; since, tho' she should ultimately refuse to be obliged to me, or, to express myself more suitably to my own heart, to oblige me, every one who sees her must befriend her.

But let me ask thee, Belford, Art thou not solicitous for me, in relation to the contents of the letter which the angry beauty has written and dispatch'd away by man and horse; and for what may be Miss Howe's answer to it? Art thou not ready to inquire, Whether it be not likely that Miss Howe, when she knows of her saucy friend's flight, will be concern'd about her letter, which she must know could not be at Wilson's till after that flight; and so, probably, would fall into my hands?—

All these things, as thou'l see in the sequel, are provided for with as much contrivance as human foresight can admit.

I have already told thee, that Will. is upon the look-out for old Grimes.—Old Grimes is, it seems, a gossiping, sottish rascal; and if Will. can but light of him, I'll answer for the consequence: For has not Will. been my servant upwards of seven years?

LETTER V.

Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.

WE had at dinner, besides Miss Rawlins, a young widow-niece of Mrs. Moore, who is come to stay a month with her aunt—*Bevis* her name; very forward, very lively, and a great admirer of *me*, I assure you;—hanging smirkingly upon all I said; and prepared to approve of every word before I spoke: And who, by the time we had half-dined (by the help of what she had collected before), was as

much acquainted with our story, as either of the other two.

As it behoved me to prepare them in my favour against whatever might come from Miss Howe, I improved upon the hint I had thrown out above-stairs against that mischief-making Lady. I represented her to be an arrogant creature, revengeful, artful, enterprising, and one who, had she been a man, would have sworn and curs'd, and committed rapes, and play'd the devil, as far as I knew [and I have no doubt of it, Jack]: but who, nevertheless, by advantage of a female education, and pride, and insolence, I believed was personally virtuous.

Mrs. Bevis allowed, that there was a *vast deal* in education—and in *pride* too, she said. While Miss Rawlins came with a prudish God forbid, that virtue should be owing to education only! However, I declared, that Miss Howe was a subtle contriver of mischief; one who had always been *my* enemy: her motives I knew not: but, despising the man whom her mother was desirous she should have, one Hickman; altho' I did not directly averr, that she would rather have had me; yet they all immediately imagined, that *that* was the ground of her animosity to me, and of her envy to my beloved; and it was pity, they said, that so fine a young Lady did not see thro' such a pretended friend.

And yet nobody (added I) has more reason than she to know by *experience* the force of a hatred founded in envy; as I hinted to *you* above, Mrs. Moore, and to *you*, Miss Rawlins, in the case of her sister Arabella.

I had compliments made to my person and talents on this occasion; which gave me a singular opportunity of displaying my modesty, by disclaiming the merit of them, with a *No, indeed!*—*I should be very vain, Ladies, if I thought so.* While thus abasing myself,

myself, and exalting Miss Howe, I got their opinion both for modesty and generosity; and had all the graces which I disclaimed, thrown in upon me, besides.

In short, they even oppressed that modesty, which (to speak modestly of myself) their praises *created*, by disbelieving all I said against myself.

And, truly, I must needs say, they have almost persuaded even me myself, that Miss Howe is actually in love with me. I have often been willing to hope this. And who knows but she may? The Captain and I have agreed, that it shall be so insinuated occasionally—And what's thy opinion, Jack? She certainly hates Hickman: And girls who are *disengaged* seldom hate, tho' they may not *love*: And if she had rather have *another*, why not that other M E? For am I not a smart fellow, and a rake? And do not your sprightly Ladies love your smart fellows, and your rakes? And where is the wonder, that the man who could engage the affections of Miss Harlowe, should engage those of a Lady (with her (*a*) *Alas's*) who would be honoured in being deemed her second?

Nor accuse thou me of SINGULAR vanity in this presumption, Belford. Wert thou to know the secret vanity that lurks in the hearts of those who *disguise* or *cloak it best*, thou wouldest find great reason to acquit, at least to allow for, *me*: since it is generally the *conscious over-fulness of conceit*, that makes the hypocrite most upon his guard to conceal it.— Yet with these fellows, proudly-humble as they are, it will break out sometimes in spite of thier cloaks, tho' but in self-denying, compliment-begging self-degradation.

But now I have appealed this matter to thee, let

(a) See vol. iv. p. 341, where Miss Howe says, *Alas, my dear, I knew you loved him!*

me use another argument in favour of my observation, that the Ladies generally prefer a rake to a sober man ; and of my presumption upon it, that Miss Howe is in love with me : It is this :—Common fame says, That Hickman is a very virtuous, a very innocent fellow—a *male-virgin*, I warrant !—An odd dog I always thought him.—Now women, Jack, like not novices. They are pleased with a Love of the Sex that is founded in the knowlege of it. Reason good. Novices expect more than they can possibly find in the commerce with them. The man who knows them, yet has *ardors* for them, to borrow a word from Miss Howe (*a*), tho' those ardors are generally owing more to the devil *within* him, than to the witch *without* him, is the man who makes them the highest and most grateful compliment. He knows what to expect, and with what to be satisfied.

Then the merit of a woman, in some cases, must be *ignorance*, whether *real* or *pretended*. The Man, in *these* cases, must be an *adept*. Will it then be wondered at, that a woman prefers a libertine to a novice ?—While she expects in the one the confidence *she* wants ; she considers the other and herself as two parallel lines ; which, tho' they run side by side, can never meet.

Yet in this the Sex is generally mistaken too ; for these sheepish fellows are fly.—I myself was modest once ; and this, as I have elsewhere hinted to thee (*b*), has better enabled me to judge of both.—But to proceed with my narrative :

Having thus prepared every-one against any letter should come from Miss Howe, and against my beloved's messenger returns, I thought it proper to conclude that subject with a hint, that my spouse could not bear to have any-thing said that reflected upon *Miss*

(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 62, and 135.

p. 130, 131.

(*b*) Vol. iii.

Miss Howe; and, with a deep sigh, added, that I had been made very unhappy more than once by the ill-will of Ladies, whom I had never offended.

The widow Bevis believed, that might very easily be.

These hints within-doors, joined with others to Will, both without and within (for I intend he shall fall in love with widow Moore's maid, and have saved one hundred pounds in my service, at least), will be great helps, as things may happen.

LETTER VI.

Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.

WE had hardly dined, when my coachman, who kept a look-out for Captain Tomlinson, as Will did for old Grimes, conducted hither that worthy gentleman, attended by one servant, *both* on horse-back. He alighted. I went out to meet him at the door.

• Thou knowest his solemn appearance, and unblushing freedom; and yet canst not imagine what a dignity the rascal assumed, nor how respectful to him I was.

I led him into the parlour, and presented him to the women, and them to him.—I thought it highly imported me (as they might still have some diffidences about our marriage, from my fair-one's home-push'd questions on that head) to convince them intirely of the truth of all I had asserted. And how could I do this better, than by dialoguing with him before them a little?

Dear Captain, I thought you long; for I have had a terrible conflict with my spouse.

Capt. I am sorry that I am later than my intention—My account with my banker—[There's a dog,

Jack!] took me up longer time to adjust than I had foreseen (all the time pulling down and stroking his ruffles) : for there was a small difference between us—only twenty pounds, indeed, which I had taken no account of. The rascal has not seen twenty pounds of his own these ten years.

Then had we between us the characters of the Harlowe family : I railing against them all ; the Captain taking his dear friend Mr. John Harlowe's part ; with a *Not so fast ! — Not so fast, young gentleman !* — and the like free assumptions.

He accounted for their animosity by my defiance : No good family, having such a charming daughter, would care to be *defied*, instead of *courted* : He must speak his mind : Never was a double-tongu'd man.—He appealed to the Ladies, if he were not right.

He got them of his side.

The correction I had given the brother, he told me, must have aggravated matters.

How valiant this made me look to the women ! — The Sex love us mettled fellows at their hearts.

Be that as it would, I should never love any of the family but my spouse ; and, wanting nothing from them, would not, but for *her sake*, have gone so far as I had gone towards a reconciliation.

This was very good of me ; Mrs. Moore said.

Very good indeed ; Miss Rawlins.

Good ! — It is *more* than good ; it is very generous ; said the widow.

Capt. Why, so it is, I must needs say : For I am sensible, that Mr. Lovelace has been rudely treated by them all—More rudely, than it could have been imagined a man of his *quality* and *spirit* would have put up with. But then, Sir (turning to me), I think you are amply rewarded in such a Lady ; and that you ought to forgive the father for the daughter's sake.

Mrs.

Mrs. M. Indeed so I think.

Miss R. So must every-one think, who has seen the Lady.

Widow B. A fine Lady! to be sure! But she has a violent spirit; and some very odd humours too, by what I have heard. The value of good husbands is not known till they are lost!

Her conscience then drew a sigh from her.

Lovel. Nobody must reflect upon my angel.—An angel she is.—Some little blemishes, indeed, as to her over-hasty spirit, and as to her unforgiving temper. But this she has from the Harlowes; instigated too by *that* Miss Howe.—But her innumerable excellencies are all her own.

Capt. Ay, talk of spirit, There's a spirit, now you have named Miss Howe! [And so I led him to confirm all I had said of that vixen.] Yet she was to be pitied too, looking with meaning at me.

As I have already hinted, I had before agreed with him to impute secret love *occasionally* to Miss Howe, as the best means to invalidate all that might come from her in my disfavour.

Capt. Mr. Lovelace, but that I know your modesty, or *you* could give a reason—

Lovel. looking down, and very modest—I can't think so, Captain—But let us call another cause.

Every woman present could look me in the face, so bashful was I.

Capt. Well, but, as to our *present* situation—Only it mayn't be proper—looking upon me, and round upon the women.

Lovel. O Captain, you may say any-thing before this company—Only, Andrew, to my new servant, who attended us at table, do you withdraw: This good girl (looking at the maid-servant) will help us to all we want.

Away went Andrew: He wanted not his cue; and

the maid seemed highly pleased at my honour's preference of her.

Capt. As to our present situation, I say, Mr. Lovelace—Why, Sir, we shall be all *untwisted*, let me tell you, if my friend Mr. John Harlowe were to know what *that* is: He would as much question the truth of your being married, as the rest of the family do.

Here the women perked up their ears; and were all silent attention.

Capt. I asked you before for particulars, Mr. Lovelace: but you declined giving them.—Indeed it may not be proper for me to be acquainted with them.—But I must own, that it is past my comprehension, that a wife can resent any-thing a husband can do (that is not a breach of the peace), so far as to think herself justified for *eloping* from him.

Lovel. Captain Tomlinson—Sir—I do assure you, that I shall be offended—I shall be extremely concerned—if I hear that word mention'd again—

Capt. Your nicety, and your love, Sir, may make you take offence—But it is my way to call everything by its proper name, let who will be offended—

Thou canst not imagine, Belford, how brave, and how independent, the rascal look'd.

Capt. When, young Gentleman, you shall think proper to give us particulars, we will find a word that shall please you better, for this rash act in so admirable a Lady—You see, Sir, that, being the representative of my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe, I speak as freely as I suppose he would do, if present. But you blush, Sir—I beg your pardon, Mr. Lovelace: It becomes not a modest man to pry into those secrets, which a modest man cannot reveal.

I did not blush, Jack; but denied not the compliment, and looked down: the women seem'd delighted with my modesty: but the widow Bevis was

more

more inclined to laugh at me, than praise me for it.

Capt. Whatever be the cause of this step (I will not again, Sir, call it *elopement*, since that harsh word wounds your tenderness), I cannot but express my surprize upon it, when I recollect the affectionate behaviour, which I was witness to between you, when I attended you last. *Over-love*, Sir, I think you once mentioned—but *Over-love* (smiling), give me leave to say, Sir, is an odd cause of quarrel.—
Few Ladies—

Lovel. Dear Captain! And I tried to blush.

The women also tried; and, being more used to it, succeeded better.—Mrs. Bevis, indeed, has a red-hot countenance, and always blushes.

Miss R. It signifies nothing to mince the matter: but the Lady above as good as denies her marriage. You know, Sir, that she does; turning to me.

Capt. Denies her marriage! Heavens! how then have I imposed upon my dear friend Mr. John Harlowe!

Lovel. Poor dear!—But let not her *veracity* be called in question. She would not be guilty of a wilful untruth for the world.

Then I had all their praises again.

Lovel. Dear creature!—she thinks she has reason for her denial. You know, Mrs. Moore; you know, Miss Rawlins; what I owned to you above, as to my vow—

I look'd down, and, as once before, turned round my diamond ring.

Mrs. Moore looked awry; and with a leer at Miss Rawlins, as to her partner in the hinted-at reference.

Miss Rawlins look'd down as well as I; her eyelids half-closed, as if mumbling a Pater-noster, meditating

ditating her snuff-box, the distance between her nose and chin lengthened by a close-shut mouth.

She put me in mind of the pious Mrs. Fetherstone at Oxford, whom I pointed out to thee once, among other grotesque figures, at St. Mary's church, where we went to take a view of her two sisters: Her eyes shut, not daring to trust her heart with them open; and but just half-rearing the lids, to see who the next-comer was; and falling them again, when her curiosity was satisfied.

The widow Bevis gazed, as if on the hunt for a secret.

The Captain looked archly, as if half in possession of one.

Mrs. Moore at last broke the bashful silence. Mrs. Lovelace's behaviour, she said, could be no otherwise so well accounted-for, as by the ill-offices of *that* Miss Howe; and by the severity of her relations; which might but too probably have affected her head a little at times: Adding, that it was very generous in me to give way to the storm, when it was up, rather than to exasperate at such a time.

But let me tell you, Sirs, said the widow Bevis, that is not what one husband in a thousand would have done.

I desired, that *no part of this conversation might be hinted to my spouse*; and looked still more bashfully. Her great fault, I must own, was over-delicacy.

The Captain leered round him; and said, He believed he could guess from the hints I had given him in town (of my *over-love*), and from what had now passed, that we had not consummated our marriage.

O Jack! how sheepishly then looked, or endeavoured to look, thy friend! how primly Goody Moore! how affectedly Miss Rawlins!—while the honest widow Bevis gazed around her fearless; and tho'

tho' only simpering with her mouth, her eyes laugh'd out-right, and seem'd to challenge a laugh from every eye in the company.

He observ'd, that I was a phoenix of a man, if so ; and he could not but hope, that all matters would be happily accommodated in a day or two ; and that then he should have the pleasure to averr to her uncle, that he was present, as he might say, on our wed-ding-day.

The women seem'd all to join in the same hope.

Ah, Captain ! ah, Ladies !—how happy should I be, if I could bring my dear spouse to be of the same mind !

It would be a very happy conclusion of a very knotty affair, said widow Bevis ; and I see not why we may not make this very night a merry one.

The Captain superciliously smiled at me. He saw plainly enough, he said, that we had been at *childrens play* hitherto. A man of my character must have a prodigious value for his Lady, who could give way to such a caprice as This. But one thing he would venture to tell me ; and that was This—That, however desirous young skittish Ladies might be to have their way in this particular, it was a very bad setting-out for the man ; as it gave his bride a very high proof of the power she had over him : And he would engage, that no woman, *thus humoured*, ever valued the man the more for it ; but very much the contrary—And there were *reasons to be given why she should not*.

Well, well, Captain, no more of this subject before the Ladies.—*One* feels (in a bashful *try-to-bluff* manner, shrugging my shoulders), that *one* is *so ridiculous*—I have been punish'd enough for my tender folly.

Miss Rawlins had taken her fan, and would needs

hide her face behind it : I suppose because her blush was not quite ready.

Mrs. Moore hemm'd, and look'd down, and by that, gave hers over.

While the jolly widow, laughing out, praised the Captain, as one of Hudibras's metaphysicians, repeating,

*He knew what's what, and that's as high
As metaphysic wit can fly.*

This made Miss Rawlins blush indeed :—Fie, fie, Mrs. Bevis ! cry'd she, unwilling I suppose, to be thought absolutely ignorant.

Upon the whole, I began to think, that I had not made a bad exchange of our professing mother, for the un-professing Mrs. Moore. And indeed the women and I, and my Beloved too, all mean the same thing : We only differ about the manner of coming at the proposed end.

LETTER VII.

Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.

IT was now high time to acquaint my spouse, that Captain Tomlinson was come. And the rather, as the maid told us, that the lady had asked her, If such a gentleman (describing him) was not in the parlour ?

Mrs. Moore went up, and requested, in my name, that she would give us audience.

But she return'd, with a desire, that Captain Tomlinson would excuse her for the present. She was very ill. Her spirits were too weak to enter into conversation with him ; and she must lie down.

I was vexed, and, at first, extremely disconcerted.

The

The Captain was vexed too. And my concern, thou mayst believe, was the greater on his account.

She had been very much fatigued, I own. Her fits in the morning must have weaken'd her: And she had carried her resentment so high, that it was the less wonder she should find herself low, when her raised spirits had subsided. *Very low, I may say;* if sinkings are proportioned to risings; for she had been lifted up above the standard of a common mortal.

The Captain, however, sent up in his own name, that if he could be admitted to drink one dish of tea with her, he should take it for a favour; and would go to town, and dispatch some necessary business, if possible, to leave his morning free to attend her.

But she pleaded a violent head-ach; and Mrs. Moore confirm'd the plea to be just.

I would have had the Captain lodge there that night, as well in compliment to him, as introductory to my intention of entering my self upon my new-taken apartment. But his hours were of too much importance to him to stay the evening.

It was indeed very inconvenient for him, he said, to return in the morning; but he was willing to do all in his power to heal this breach, and that as well for the sakes of me and my lady, as for that of his dear friend Mr. John Harlowe; who must not know how far this misunderstanding had gone. He would therefore only drink one dish of tea with the ladies and me.

And accordingly, after he had done so, and I had had a little private conversation with him, he hurried away.

His fellow had given him, in the interim, a high character to Mrs. Moore's servants: And this reported by the Widow Bevis (who, being no proud woman, is *hail fellow, well met*, as the saying is, with all her aunt's servants), he was a *fine* gentleman, a *discreet* gentleman, a man of *sense* and *breeding*, with them

them all : And it was pity, that, with such great business upon his hands, he should be obliged to come again.

My life for yours, audibly whisper'd the Widow Bevis, There is humour as well as head-ach in Somebody's declining to see this worthy gentleman.—Ah, Lord ! how happy might some people be, if they would !—

No perfect happiness in this world, said I, very gravely, and with a sigh ; for the widow must know that I heard her. If we have not *real* unhappiness, we can make it, even from the overflowings of our own good fortune.

Very true, and, Very true, the two widows : A charming observation, Mrs. Bevis. Miss Rawlins smil'd her assent to it ; and I thought she call'd me in her heart, Charming man ! For she professes to be a great admirer of moral observations.

I had hardly taken leave of the Captain, and sat down again with the women, when Will. came ; and calling me out, ‘ Sir, Sir,’ said he, grinning with a familiarity in his looks, as if what he had to say intitled him to take liberties ; ‘ I have got the fellow down !—I have got old Grimes—Hah, hah, hah, hah—He is at the Lower-Flask—Almost in the condition of *David’s sow*, and please your Honour —[The dog himself not much better] Here is his letter—from—from Miss Howe—Ha, ha, ha, ha,’ laugh'd the varlet ; holding it fast, as if to make conditions with me, and to excite my praises, as well as my impatience.

I could have knock'd him down ; but he would have his *say* out—‘ Old Grimes knows not that I have the letter—I must get back to him before he misses it—I only made a pretence to go out for a few minutes—But—but’—and then the dog laugh'd again

again—‘ He must stay—Old Grimes must stay—till I go back to pay the reckoning.’

D—n the prater!—Grinning rascal!—The letter—The letter!—

He gather’d in his *wide mothe*, as he calls it, and gave me the letter; but with a *flut*, rather than a *bow*; and then sidled off like one of Widow Sorlings’s dunghill cocks, exulting after a great feat performed. And all the time that I was holding up the billet to the light, to try to get at its contents, without breaking the seal (for, dispatch’d in a hurry, it had no cover), there stood he laughing, shrugging, playing off his legs; now stroking his shining chin; now turning his hat upon his thumb; then leering in my face, flourishing with his head—O Christ! now-and-then cry’d the rascal!

What joy has this dog in mischief!—More than I can have in the completion of my most favourite purposes!—These fellows are ever happier than their masters.

I was once thinking to rumple up this billet till I had broken the seal. *Young families* (Miss Howe’s is not an antient one) love ostentatious sealings: And it might have been supposed to have been squeez’d in pieces, in old Grimes’s breeches pocket. But I was glad to be *saved* the guilt as well as suspicion of having a hand in so dirty a trick; for thus much of the contents (enough for my purpose) I was enabled to scratch out in character, without it; the folds depriving me only of a few connecting words; which I have supply’d between hooks.

My Miss Harlowe, thou knowest, had *before* changed her name to *Miss Lætitia Beaumont*. Another *alias* now, Jack: I have learn’d her to be half a rogue in this instance; for this billet was directed to her by the name of *Mrs. Harriot Lucas*.

‘ I Congratulate you, my dear, with all my heart
 ‘ and soul, upon [your escape] from the villain.
 ‘ [I long] for the particulars of all. [My mamma] is
 ‘ out : But expecting her return every minute, I
 ‘ dispatch’d [your] messenger instantly. [I will en-
 ‘ deavour to come at] Mrs. Townsend without los-
 ‘ of time ; and will write at large in a day or two,
 ‘ if in that time I can see her. [Mean time I] am
 ‘ excessively uneasy for a letter I sent you yester-
 ‘ day by Collins, [who must have left it at] Wilson’s
 ‘ after you got away. [It is of very] great import-
 ‘ ance. [I hope the] villain has it not. I would
 ‘ not for the world [that he should.] Immediately
 ‘ send for it, if by so doing, the place you are at
 ‘ [will not be] discover’d. If he has it, let me
 ‘ know it by some way [out of] hand. If not, you
 ‘ need not send.

June 9.

Ever, ever yours,

A. H.

O Jack, what heart’s-ease does this *interception* give me !—I sent the rascal back with the letter to old Grimes, and charg’d him to drink no deeper. He own’d, that he was *half seas over*, as he phrased it.

Dog ! said I, are you not to court one of Mrs. Moore’s maids to-night ?—

Cry your mercy, Sir !—I will be sober.—I had forgot that—But old Grimes is plaguy tough—I thought I should never have got him down.

Away, villain !—Let old Grimes come ; and on horseback, too, to the door—

He shall, and please your Honour, if I can get him on the saddle, and if he can sit—

And charge him not to have alighted, nor to have seen *any-body*—

Enough, Sir ! familiarly nodding his head, to shew he took me. And away went the villain : Into the parlour, among the women, I.

In a quarter of an hour came old Grimes on horseback, waving to his faddle-bow, now on this side, now on that ; his head, at others, joining to that of his more sober beast.

It look'd very well to the women, that I made no effort to speak to old Grimes (tho' I wish'd before them, that I knew the contents of what he brought) ; but, on the contrary, desired that they would instantly let my spouse know, that her messenger was return'd. Down she flew, violently as she had the head-ach !

O how I pray'd for an opportunity to be reveng'd of her, for the ingrateful trouble she had given to her uncle's friend !

She took the letter from old Grimes with her own hands, and retired to an inner parlour to read it.

She presently came out again to the fellow, who had much ado to sit his horse—Here is your money, friend. I thought you long. But what shall I do to get somebody to go to town immediately for me ? I see you cannot.

Old Grimes took his money ; let fall his hat in d'offing it ; had it given him ; and rode away ; his eyes ifing-glas, and set in his head, as I saw thro' the window ; and in a manner speechless ; all his language hiccoughs. My dog need not have gone so deep with this *tough* old Grimes.—But the rascal was in his kingdom with him.

The lady apply'd to Mrs. Moore : She matter'd not the price. Could a man and horse be engaged for her ?—Only to go for a letter left for her, at one Mr. Wilson's in Pall-mall.

A poor neighbour was hired. A horse procured for him. He had his directions.

In

In vain did I endeavour to engage my Beloved, when she was below. Her head-ach, I suppose, return'd. She, like the rest of her sex, can be ill or well when she pleases.—

I see her drift, thought I : It is to have all her lights from Miss Howe before she resolves ; and to take her measures accordingly.

Up she went, expressing great impatience about the letter she had sent for ; and desired Mrs. Moore to let her know, if I offer'd to send any of my servants to town—To get at the letter, I suppose, was her fear. But she might have been quite easy on that head ; and yet perhaps would not, had she known, that the worthy Captain Tomlinson (who will be in town before her messenger) will leave there the important letter : Which I hope will help to pacify her, and to reconcile her to me.

O Jack ! Jack ! thinkest thou that I will take all this roguish pains, and be so often called villain, for nothing ?

But yet, is it not taking pains to come at the finest creature in the world, not for a *transitory moment* only, but for one of our lives ?—The struggle, Whether I am to have her in *my own way*, or in *hers* ?

But now I know thou wilt be frighten'd out of thy wits for me—What, Lovelace ! wouldst thou let her have a letter that will inevitably blow thee up ; and blow up the mother, and all her nymphs !—yet not intend to reform, to marry ?

Patience, puppy ! Canst thou not trust thy master ?

LETTER VIII.

Mr. LOVELACE. In Continuation.

I Went up to my new-taken apartment, and fell to writing in character, as usual. I thought I had made good my quarters. But the cruel creature, understanding

derstanding that I intended to take up my lodgings there, declared with so much violence against it, that I was obliged to submit, and to accept of another lodging, about twelve doors off, which Mrs. Moore recommended. And all the advantage I could obtain, was, that Will, unknown to my spouse, and for fear of a freak, should lie in the house.

Mrs. Moore, indeed, was unwilling to disoblige either of us. But Miss Rawlins was of opinion, that nothing more ought to be allow'd me: And yet Mrs. Moore owned, that the refusal was a strange piece of tyranny to an husband, if I were an husband.

I had a good mind to make Miss Rawlins smart for it. Come and see Miss Rawlins, Jack—If thou likest her, I'll get her for thee with a *wet finger*, as the saying is!

The Widow Bevis indeed stickled hard for me [An innocent or injur'd man will have friends everywhere]. She said, That to bear much with some wives, was to be obliged to bear more: And I reflected, with a sigh, *that tame spirits must always be imposed upon*. And then, in my heart, I renew'd my vows of revenge upon this haughty and perverse beauty.

The second fellow came back from town about nine o'clock, with Miss Howe's letter of Wednesday last. ‘ Collins, it seems, when he left it, had desired, that it might be safely and speedily delivered into Miss Lætitia Beaumont's own hands. ‘ But Wilson, understanding that neither she nor I were in town [He could not know of our difference, thou must think], resolved to take care of it till our return, in order to give it into one of our own hands; and now deliver'd it to her messenger.’

This was told her. Wilson, I doubt not, is in her favour upon it.

She

She took the letter with great eagerness, open'd it in a hurry [I am glad she did : Yet, I believe, all was right] before Mrs. Moore, and Mrs. Bevis (Miss Rawlins was gone home) ; and said, She would not for the world, that I should have had that letter ; for the sake of her dear friend the writer ; who had written to her very uneasily about it.

Her dear friend ! repeated Mrs. Bevis, when she told me this ; — Such mischief-makers are always deem'd *dear friends* till they are found out !

The widow says, that I am the finest gentleman she ever beheld.

I have found a warm kiss now-and-then very kindly taken.

I might be a very wicked fellow, Jack, if I were to do all the mischief in my power. But I am evermore for quitting a too-easy prey to *reptile-rakes*. What but difficulty (tho' the lady is an angel), engages me to so much perseverance here ? And here, *Conquer or die*, is now the determination !



I HAVE just now parted with this honest widow. She called upon me at my new lodgings. I told her that I saw, I must be further oblig'd to her in the course of this difficult affair : She must allow me to make her a handsome present when all was happily over. But I desired, that she would take no notice of what should pass between us, *not even to her aunt* ; for that she, as I saw, was in the power of Miss Rawlins : Who, being a maiden gentlewoman, knew not the *right* and the *fit* in matrimonial matters, as she, my dear widow, did.

Very true : How *should* she ? said Mrs. Bevis, proud of knowing—nothing ! But, for her part, she desired no present. It was enough if she could contribute to reconcile man and wife, and disappoint mischief-makers. She doubted not, that such an en-

vious

vious creature as Miss Howe was glad that Mrs. Lovelace had eloped — Jealousy and Love was old Nick!

See, Belford, how charmingly things work between me and my new acquaintance, the widow! — Who knows, but that she may, after a little farther intimacy (tho' I am banished the house on nights), contrive a midnight visit for me to my spouse, when all is still and fast asleep?

Where can a woman be safe, who has once enter'd the lists with a contriving and intrepid lover?

But as to this *letter*, methinks thou sayest, of Miss Howe?

I knew thou wouldest be uneasy for me: But did not I tell thee, that I had provided for every thing? That I always took care to keep seals intire, and to preserve covers (*a*)? Was it not easy then, thinkest thou, to contrive a shorter letter out of a longer; and to copy the very words?

I can tell thee, it was so well ordered, that, not being suspected to have been in my hands, it was not easy to find me out. Had it been my Beloved's hand, there would have been no imitating it, for such a length. Her delicate and even mind is seen in the very cut of her letters. Miss Howe's hand is no bad one; but is not so equal and regular. That little devil's natural impatience hurrying on her fingers, gave, I suppose, from the beginning, her handwriting, as well as the rest of her, its fits and starts, and those peculiarities, which, like strong muscular lines in a face, neither the pen nor the pencil can miss.

Hast thou a mind to see what it was I permitted Miss Howe to write to her lovely friend? Why then read it here, as if by way of marginal observation,

(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 348.

tion, as extracted from hers of Wednesday last (*a*) ; with a few additions of my own. — The additions underscored (*).

If

My dear Friend,

YOU will perhaps think, that I have been too long silent. But I had begun two letters at different times since my last, and written a great deal each time ; and with spirit enough, I assure you ; incensed as I was against the abominable wretch you are with, particularly on reading yours of the 21st of the past month.

The **FIRST** I intended to keep open till I could give you some accounts of my proceedings with Mrs. Townsend. It was some days before I saw her : And this intervening space giving me time to reperuse what I had written, I thought it proper to lay that aside, and to write in a style a little less fervent ; for you would have blamed me, I knew, for the freedom of some of my expressions (execrations, if you please). And when I had gone a good way in the **SECOND**, the change in your prospects, on his communicating to you Miss Montague's letter, and his better behaviour, occasioning a change in your mind, I laid that aside also : And in this uncertainty thought I would wait to see the issue of affairs between you, before I wrote again ; believing that all would soon be decided one way or other. —



*Here I was forced to break off. I am too little my own mistress. — My mother (*b*) always up and down ; and watching as if I were writing to a fellow. What need I (she asks me) lock myself in (*c*), if I am only reading past correspondencies ? For that is my pretence, when she comes poking in with her face sharpen'd to an edge, as I may say, by a curiosity, that gives her more pain than pleasure — The Lord forgive me ; but I believe I shall Huff her, next time she comes in.*



Do you forgive me too, my dear. My mother ought ; because she says, I am my father's girl ; and because I am sure I am hers.

Upon my life, my dear, I am sometimes of opinion, that this wile man was capable of meaning you dishonour. When I look back upon his past conduct, I cannot help thinking so : What a villain, if so ! — But now I hope, and verily believe, that he has laid aside such thoughts. My reasons for both opinions I will give you.

*For the first, to wit, that he had it once in his head to take you at advantage if he could ; I consider (*d*), that pride, revenge, and a delight to tread in unbeaten paths, are principal ingredients in the character of this finish'd libertine. He hates all your family, yourself excepted. — Yet is a savage in love. His pride, and the credit which a few plausible qualities sprinkled among his odious ones, have given him, have*

(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 328.

(*) *Mr. Lovelace's additions and connexions in this letter are printed in the Italick character.*

(*b*) Vol. iv. p. 329. (*c*) p. 331. (*d*) p. 336.

If thou art capable of taking in all my *precautionaries* in this letter, thou wilt admire my sagacity and contrivance, almost as much as I do myself. Thou
seest,

have secured him too good a reception from our eye-judging, our undistinguishing, our self-flattering, our too-confiding sex, to make assiduity and obsequiousness, and a conquest of his unruly passions, any part of his study.

He has some reason for his animosity to all the men, and to one woman, of your family. He has always shewn you and his own family too, that he prefers his pride to his interest. He is a declared marriage-hater; a notorious intriguer; full of his inventions, and glorying in them. As his vanity had made him imagine, that no woman could be proof against his love, no wonder that he struggled like a lion held in toils (e), against a passion that he thought not returned (f). Hence, perhaps, it is not difficult to believe, that it became possible for such a wretch as this to give way to his old prejudices against marriage; and to that revenge which had always been a first passion with him (g).

And hence may we account for his delays; his teasing ways; his bringing you to bear with his lodging in the same house; his making you pass to the people of it as his wife; his bringing you into the company of his libertine companions; the attempt of imposing upon you that Miss Partington for a bedfellow, &c.

My reasons for the contrary opinion; to wit, that he is now resolved to do you all the justice in his power to do you; are these: That he sees that all his own family (b) have warmly engaged themselves in your cause; that the horrid wretch loves you — With such a Love, however, as Herod loved his Mariamne: That, on inquiry, I find it to be true, that counsellor Williams (whom Mr. Hickman knows to be a man of eminence in his profession) has actually as good as finished the settlements: That two draughts of them have been made; one avowedly to be sent to this very Captain Tomlinson: And I find, that a licence has actually been more than once endeavoured to be obtained, and that difficulties have hitherto been made equally to Lovelace's vexation and disappointment. My mother's proctor, who is very intimate with the proctor apply'd to by the wretch, has come at this information, in confidence; and hints, that as Mr. Lovelace is a man of high fortunes, these difficulties will probably be got over.

I had once resolved to make strict inquiry about Tomlinson; and still, if you will, your uncle's favourite housekeeper may be sounded, at distance.

I know that the matter is so laid (i), that Mrs. Hodges is supposed to know nothing of the treaty set on foot by means of Capt. Tomlinson. But your uncle is an old man (k), and old men imagine themselves to be under obligation to their paramours, if younger than themselves, and seldom keep any thing from their knowledge.— Yet, methinks, there can be no need; since Tomlinson, as you describe him, is so good a man, and so much of a gentleman; the end to be answered by his being

(e) Vol. iv. p. 337. (f) ibid. (g) p. 338. (b) p. 340. (i) p. 333.
(k) p. 334.

feest, that Miss Lardner, Mrs. Sinclair, Tomlinson, Mrs. Fretchville, Mennell, are all mentioned in it. My first liberties with her person also [Modesty, modesty,

ing an impostor so much more than necessary, if Lovelace has villainy in his head.—And thus what he communicated to you of Mr. Hickman's application to your uncle, and of Mrs. Norton's to your mother (some of which particulars I am satisfied his vile agent Joseph Leman could not reveal to his viler employer); his pushing on the marriage-day, in the name of your uncle; which it could not answer any wicked purpose for him to do; and what he writes of your uncle's proposal, to have it thought that you were married from the time that you had lived in one house together; and that to be made to agree with the time of Mr. Hickman's visit to your uncle; the insisting on a trusty person's being present at the ceremony, at that uncle's nomination—These things make me assured that he now at last means honourably.

But if any unexpected delay should happen on his side, acquaint me, my dear, of the very street where Mrs. Sinclair lives; and where Mrs. Fretchville's house is situated (which I cannot find that you have ever mentioned in your former letters—which is a little odd); and I will make strict inquiries of them, and of Tomlinson too; and I will (if your heart will let you take my advice) soon procure you a refuge from him with Mrs. Townsend.

But why do I now, when you seem to be in so good a train, puzzle and perplex you with my retrospections? And yet they may be of use to you, if any delay happen on his part.

*But that I think cannot well be. What you have therefore now to do, is, so to behave to this proud-spirited wretch, as may banish from his mind all remembrance of past disengagements (*l*), and to receive his addresses, as those of a betrothed lover. You will incur the censure of prudery and affectation, if you keep him at that distance, which you have hitherto kept him at. His sudden (and as suddenly recover'd) illness has given him an opportunity to find out that you love him [*Alas, my dear, I knew you loved him!*]: He has seemed to change his nature, and is all love and gentleness: *And no more quarrels now, I beseech you.**

*I am very angry with him, nevertheless, for the freedoms which he took with your person (*m*); and I think some guard is necessary, as he is certainly an incroacher. But indeed all men are so; and you are such a charming creature, and have kept him at such a distance!—But no more of this subject. Only, my dear, be not over-nice, now you are so near the state. You see what difficulties you laid yourself under, when Tomlinson's letter called you again into the wretch's company.*

*If you meet with no impediments, no new causes of doubt (*n*), your reputation in the eye of the world is concerned, that you should be his, and, as your uncle rightly judges, be thought to have been his, before now. And yet, let me tell you, I can hardly bear to think, that*

(*l*) Vol. iv. p. 341. (*m*) See p. 258, 259, 260. (*n*) p. 342.

modesty, Belford, I doubt, is more confined to time, place, and occasion, even by the most delicate minds, than those minds would have it believed to be]. And why all these taken notice of by me from the genuine

these libertines should be rewarded for their villainy with the best of the sex, when the worst of it are too good for them.

I shall send this long letter by Collins (*o*), who changes his day to oblige me. As none of our letters by Wilson's conveyance have miscarried, when you have been in more apparently disagreeable situations than you are in at present, I have no doubt that this will go safe.

Miss Lardner (*p*) (whom you have seen at her cousin Biddulph's) saw you at St. James's Church on Sunday was fortnight. She kept you in her eye during the whole time; but could not once obtain the notice of yours, tho' she courtesied to you twice. She thought to pay her compliments to you when the service was over; for she doubted not but you were married---and for an odd reason---because you came to church by yourself. --- Every eye, as usual, she said was upon you; and this seeming to give you hurry, and you being nearer the door than she, you slid out before she could go to you. But she order'd her servant to follow you till you were housed. This servant saw you step into a chair which waited for you; and you ordered the men to carry you to the place where they took you up. She describes the house as a very genteel house, and fit to receive people of fashion: *And what makes me mention this, is, that perhaps you will have a visit from her; or message, at least.*

*So that you have Mr. Doleman's testimony to the credit of the house and people you are with (*q*); and he is a man of fortune, and some reputation; formerly a rake indeed; but married to a woman of family; and, having had a palfy-blow, one would think, a penitent. You have also Mr. Mennell's at least passive testimony; Mr. Tomlinson's; and now, lastly, Miss Lardner's; so that there will be the less need for inquiry: But you know my busy and inquisitive temper, as well as my affection for you, and my concern for your honour. But all doubt will soon be lost in certainty.*

*Newertheless I must add, that I would have you command me up, if I can be of the least service or pleasure to you (*r*). I value not fame; I value not censure; nor even life itself, I verily think, as I do your honour, and your friendship. --- For is not your honour my honour? And is not your friendship the pride of my life?*

May heaven preserve you, my dearest creature, in honour and safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your ever faithful and affectionate

Thursday Morn. 5.

ANNA HOWE.

I have written all night. Excuse indifferent writing. My crow-quills are worn to the stumps, and I must get a new supply.

These Ladies always write with crow-quills, Jack.

(*o*) p. 343. (*p*) p. 331, 332. (*q*) p. 331. (*r*) p. 344.

letter, but for fear some future letter from the vixen should escape my hands, in which she might refer to these names? And if none of them were to have been found in this that is to pass for hers, I might be routed *horse and foot*, as Lord M. would phrase it, in a like case.

Devilish hard (and yet I may thank myself) to be put to all this plague and trouble!—And for what, dost thou ask? O Jack, for a triumph of more value to me beforehand than an imperial crown!—Don't ask me the value of it a month hence. But what indeed is an imperial crown itself, when a man is used to it?

Miss Howe might well be anxious about the letter she wrote. Her sweet friend, from what I have let pass of hers, has reason to rejoice in the thought, that it fell not into my hands,

And now must all my contrivances be set at work, to intercept the expected letter from Miss Howe; which is, as I suppose, to direct her to a place of safety, and out of my knowlege. Mrs. Townsend is, no doubt, in this case, to smuggle her off. I hope the *villain*, as I am so frequently called between these two girls, will be able to manage this point.

But what, perhaps, thou askest, if the lady should take it into her head, by the connivance of Miss Rawlins, to quit this house privately in the night?

I have thought of this, Jack. Does not Will lie in the house? And is not the Widow Bevis my fast friend?

LETTER IX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Saturday, 6 o'clock, June 10.

THE lady gave Will's sweetheart a letter last night to be carried to the post-house as this morning, directed for Miss Howe, under cover to Hickman.

Hickman. I dare say neither cover nor letter will be seen to have been open'd. The contents but eight lines—To own—‘The receipt of her double-dated letter in safety: and referring to a longer letter, which she intends to write, when she shall have a quieter heart, and less trembling fingers. But mentions something to have happen'd [My detecting her, she means], which has given her very great flutters, confusions, and apprehensions: But which she will await the issue of [Some hopes for me hence, Jack!] before she gives her fresh perturbation or concern on her account.—She tells her how impatient she shall be for her next, &c.’

Now, Belford, I thought it would be but kind in me to save Miss Howe's concern on these alarming hints; since the curiosity of such a spirit must have been prodigiously excited by them. Having therefore so good a copy to imitate, I wrote; and, taking out that of my Beloved, put under the same cover the following short billet; inscriptive and conclusive parts of it in her own words.

Hamstead, Tuesday evening.

My ever-dear Miss Howe,

A Few lines only, till calmer spirits and quieter fingers be granted me, and till I can get over the shock which your intelligence has given me—To acquaint you—that your kind long letter of Wednesday, and, as I may say, of Thursday morning, is come safe to my hands. On receipt of yours by my messenger to you, I sent for it from Wilson's. There, thank heaven! it lay. May that heaven reward you for all your past, and for all your intended goodness to

Your for-ever obliged,

CL. HARLOWE.

I took great pains in writing this. It cannot, I hope, be suspected. Her hand is so *very* delicate.

Yet hers is written less beautifully than she usually writes : And I hope Miss Howe will allow somewhat for hurry of spirits, and unsteady fingers.

My consideration for Miss Howe's *ease of mind* extended still farther than to the instance I have mentioned.

That this billet might be with her as soon as possible (and before it could have reach'd Hickman by the post), I dispatch'd it away by a servant of Mowbray's. Miss Howe, had there been any failure or delay, might, as thou wilt think, have communicated her anxieties to her fugitive friend ; and she *to me*, perhaps, in a way I should not have been pleased with.

Once more wilt thou wonderingly question—All this pains for a single girl ?

Yes, Jack ! — But is not this girl a CLARISSA ? — And who knows, but kind Fortune, as a reward for my perseverance, may toss me in her charming friend ? Less likely things have come to pass, Belford ! — And to be sure I shall have her, if I resolve upon it.

LETTER X.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Eight o'clock, Sat. Morn. June 10.

I Am come back from Mrs. Moore's, whither I went in order to attend my charmer's commands. But no admittance. A very bad night.

Doubtless she must be as much concern'd, that she has carried her resentments so very far, as I have reason to be, that I made such a poor use of the opportunity I had on Wednesday night.

But now, Jack, for a brief review of my present situation ; and a slight hint or two of my precautions.

I have seen the women this morning, and find them half-right, half-doubting.

Miss

Miss Rawlins's brother tells her, that she *lives* at Mrs. Moore's.

Mrs. Moore can do nothing without Miss Rawlins.

People who keep lodgings at public places expect to get by every one who comes into their purlieus. Tho' not permitted to lodge there myself, I have engag'd all the rooms she has to spare, to the very garrets; and *that*, as I have told thee before, for a month certain, and at her own price, board included; my spouse's and all: But she must not, at present, know it. So I hope I have Mrs. Moore fast *by the interest*.

This, devil-like, is suiting temptations to inclinations.

I have always observed, and, I believe, I have hinted as much formerly (*a*), that all dealers, tho' but for pins, may be taken in by customers for pins, sooner than by a direct bribe of ten times the value; especially if pretenders to conscience: For the offer of a bribe, would not only give room for suspicion; but would startle and alarm their scrupulousness; while a high price paid for what you buy, is but submitting to be cheated in the method the person makes a profession to get by. Have I not said, that human nature is a rogue (*b*)?—And do not I know it?

To give a higher instance, How many proud senators, in the year 1720, were induced, by presents or subscriptions of South Sea stock, to contribute to a scheme big with national ruin; who yet would have spurn'd the man who should have presumed to offer them even twice the sum certain, that they had a chance to gain by the stock?—But to return to my review, and my precautions.

Miss Rawlins fluctuates as she hears the lady's story, or as she hears mine. Somewhat of an infidel, I doubt, is this Miss Rawlins. I have not yet

F 3 consider'd

(*a*) Vol. iii. p. 172. (*c*) Vol. iii. p. 177. Vol. iv. p. 17.

consider'd *her* foible. The next time I see her, I will take particular notice of all the moles and freckles in her mind ; and then *infer* and *apply*.

The Widow Bevis, as I have told thee, is all my own.

My man Will. lies in the house. My other new fellow attends upon *me* ; and cannot therefore be quite stupid.

Already is Will. over head and ears in love with one of Mrs. Moore's maids. He was struck with her the moment he set his eyes upon her. A raw country wench too. But all women, from the countess to the cookmaid, are put into high good humour with themselves, when a man is taken with them at first sight. Be they ever so plain [No woman can be ugly, Jack !], they'll find twenty good reasons, besides the great one, for *Sake's sake*, by the help of the glass without (and perhaps in spite of it), and conceit within, to justify the honest fellow's *caption*.

" The rogue has saved 150l. in my service"—More by 50 than I bid him save. No doubt he thinks he *might* have done so ; tho', I believe, not worth a groat. " The best of masters I—Passionate, " indeed : But soon appeased."

The wench is extremely kind to him already. The other maid is also very civil to him. He has a husband for *her* in his eye. She cannot but say, that Mr. Andrew, my *other* servant [The girl is for fixing the *person*] is a very well-spoken civil young man.

" We common folks have our joys, and please " your Honour, says honest Joseph Leman, like as " our betters have (a)." And true says honest Joseph—Did I prefer ease to difficulty, I should envy these low-degree sinners some of their joys.

But if Will. had *not* made amorous pretensions to the wenches, we all know, that servants, united in one

one common *compare-note* cause, are intimate the moment they see one another—Great genealogists too; they know immediately the whole kin and kin's kin of each other, tho' dispersed over the three kingdoms, as well as the genealogies and kin's kin of those they serve.

But my precautions end not here.

O Jack, with such an invention, what occasion had I to carry my Beloved to Mrs. Sinclair's?

My spouse may have *further* occasion for the messengers whom she dispatch'd, one to Miss Howe, the other to Wilson's. With one of these Will. is already well-acquainted, as thou hast heard—To mingle liquor is to mingle souls with these fellows: With the other he will soon be acquainted, if he be not *already*.

The Captain's servant has *his* uses and instructions assign'd him. I have hinted at some of them already (*a*). He also serves a most humane and considerate master. I love to make every-body respected to my power.

The post, general and peny, will be strictly watch'd likewise.

Miss Howe's Collins is remember'd to be described. Miss Howe's and Hickman's liveries also.

James Harlowe and Singleton are warned against. I am to be acquainted with any inquiry that shall happen to be made after my spouse, whether by her married or maiden name, before *she* shall be told of it—And this that I may have it in my power to prevent mischief.

I have order'd Mowbray and Tourville (and Belton, if his health permit) to take their quarters at Hamstead for a week, with their fellows to attend them. I spare thee for the present, because of thy private

concerns. But hold thyself in cheerful readiness however, as a mark of thy *allegiance*.

As to my spouse herself, has she not reason to be pleased with me, for having permitted her to receive Miss Howe's letter from Wilson's? A plain case, either that I am no deep plotter, or that I have no further views but to make my peace with her, for an offence so slight, and so *accidental*.

Miss Howe says, tho' prefaced with an *alas!* that her charming friend loves me: She must therefore yearn after this reconciliation—Prospects so fair—if she used me with less rigor, and more politeness; if she shewed me any *compassion*; seemed inclinable to spare me, and to make the most favourable constructions; I cannot but say, that it would be impossible not to shew her some. But to be insulted and defied by a rebel in one's power, what prince can bear that?

But I return to the scene of action. I must keep the women steady. I had no opportunity to talk to my worthy Mrs. Bevis in private.

Tomlinson, a dog, not come yet!

LETTER XI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

From my apartments at Mrs. Moore's.

MISS Rawlins at her brother's; Mrs. Moore engaged in household matters; Widow Bevis dressing; I have nothing to do but write. This cursed Tomlinson not yet arrived! Nothing to be done without him.

I think he shall complain in pretty high language of the treatment he met with yesterday. ‘ What are our affairs to him? He can have no view but to serve us. Cruel, to send back to town, un-audenced, unseen, a man of his business and importance.

portance. He never stirs a foot, but something of consequence depends upon his movements. A confounded thing to trifle thus humoursomely with such a gentleman's moments! — These women think, that all the business of the world must stand still for their *figaries* [A good female word, Jack!]: The greatest triflers in the creation, to fancy themselves the most important beings in it — *Marry come up!* as I have heard Goody Sorlings say to her servants, when she has rated at them, with mingled anger and disdain.

After all, methinks I want these *tostifications* [Thou seest how women, and womens words, fill my mind] to be over, *happily* over, that I may sit down quietly, and reflect upon the dangers I have passed thro', and the troubles I have undergone. I have a *reflecting* mind, as thou knowest; but the very word implies, *All got over.*

What bryars and thorns does the wretch rush into (a scratch'd face and tatter'd garments the unavoidable consequence), who will needs be for striking out a new path thro' overgrown underwood; quitting that beaten out for him by those who have travelled the same road before him!



A VISIT from the Widow Bevis, in my own apartment. She tells me, that my spouse had thoughts last night, after I was gone to my lodgings, of removing from Mrs. Moore's. I almost wish she had attempted to do so.

Miss Rawlins, it seems, who was apply'd to upon it, dissuaded her from it.

Mrs. Moore also, tho' she did not own that Will lay in the house (or rather sat up in it, courting), set before her the difficulties, which, in her opinion, she would have to get clear off, without my knowledge; assuring her, that she could be no-where safer

than with her, till she had fixed whither to go. And the lady herself recollect'd, that if she went, she might miss the expected letter from her dear friend Miss Howe; which, as she owned, was to direct her future steps.

She must also surely have some curiosity to know what her uncle's friend had to say to her from her uncle, contemptuously as she yesterday treated a man of his importance. Nor could she, I should think, be absolutely determin'd to put herself out of the way of receiving the visits of two of the principal ladies of my family, and to break intirely with me in the face of them all.—Besides, whither could she have gone?—Moreover, Miss Howe's letter coming, after her elopement, so safely to her hands, must surely put her into a more confiding temper with me, and with every one else, tho' she would not immediately own it.

But these good folks have so *little charity!*—Are such *severe* censurers!—Yet who is *absolutely perfect*?—It were to be wished, however, that they would be so modest as to doubt themselves sometimes: Then would they allow for others, as others (*excellent* as they imagine themselves to be) must for them.

Saturday, one o'clock.

TOMLINSON at last is come. Forced to ride five miles about (tho' I shall impute his delay to great and important business) to avoid the sight of two or three impudent rascals, who, little thinking whose affairs he was employ'd in, wanted to obtrude themselves upon him. I think I will make this fellow easy, if he behave to my liking in this affair.

I sent up the moment he came.

She desired to be excused receiving his visit till four this afternoon.

Intolerable!—*No consideration!*—*None at all in this*

this sex, when their cursed humours are in the way ! —Pay-day, pay-hour, rather, will come !—O that it were to be the next !

The Captain is in a pet. Who can blame him ? Even the women think a man of his consequence, and generously coming to serve us, hardly used. Would to heaven she had attempted to get off last night : The women not my enemies, who knows but the husband's exerted authority might have met with such connivance, as might have concluded either in carrying her back to her former lodgings, or in consummation at Mrs. Moore's, in spite of exclamations, fits, and the rest of the female obscenities ?

My beloved has not appeared to any-body this day, except to Mrs. Moore. Is, it seems, extremely low : Unfit for the interesting conversation that is to be held in the afternoon. Longs to hear from her dear friend Miss Howe—Yet cannot expect a letter for a day or two. Has a bad opinion of all mankind.—No wonder !—Excellent creature as she is ! with such a *father*, such *uncles*, such a *brother*, as she has !

How does she look ?

Better than could be expected from yesterday's fatigue, and last night's ill rest.

These tender doves know not, till put to it, what they can bear ; especially when engaged in love-affairs ; and their attention wholly engrossed. But the sex love busy scenes. Still-life is their aversion. A woman will *create* a storm, rather than be without one. So as they can preside in the whirlwind, and direct it, they are happy.—But my beloved's misfortune is, that she must live in tumults ; yet neither raise them herself, nor be able to controul them.

LETTER XII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Sat. Night, June 10.

WHAT will be the issue of all my plots and contrivances, devil take me if I am able to divine! But I will not, as Lord M. would say *forestall my own market.*

At four, the appointed hour, I sent up, to desire admittance in the Captain's name and my own.

She would wait upon the *Captain* presently [Not upon *me!*]; and in the parlour, if it were not engaged.

The dining-room being *mine*, perhaps that was the reason of her naming the parlour—Mighty nice again, if so!—No good sign for me, thought I, this stiffness.

In the parlour, with me and the Captain, were Mrs. Moore, Miss Rawlins, and Mrs. Bevis.

The women said, they would withdraw, when the Lady came down.

Lovel. Not, except she chooses you should, Ladies.—People who are so much above-board as I am, need not make secrets of any of their affairs. Besides, you three Ladies are now acquainted with all our concerns.

Capt. I have some things to say to your Lady, that perhaps she would not herself choose that any-body should hear; not even *you*, Mr. Lovelace, as you and her family are not upon such a good foot of understanding as were to be wished.

Lovel. Well, well, Captain, I must submit. Give us a sign to withdraw; and we will withdraw.

It was better that the exclusion of the women should come from him, than from me.

Capt.

Capt. I will bow, and wave my hand, thus—when I wish to be alone with the lady. Her uncle dotes upon her : I hope, Mr. Lovelace, you will not make a reconciliation more difficult, for the earnestness which my dear friend shews to bring it to bear : But indeed I must tell you, *as I told you more than once before*, that I am afraid you have made lighter of the occasion of this misunderstanding to me, than it ought to have been made.

Lovel. I hope, Captain Tomlinson, you do not question my veracity !

Capt. I beg your pardon, Mr. Lovelace—But those things which we men may think lightly of, may not be so to a lady of delicacy.—And then, if you *have* bound yourself by a vow, you ought—

Miss Rawlins bridling, her lips closed (but her mouth stretched to a smile of approbation, the longer for not buttoning), tacitly shewed herself pleased with the Captain for his delicacy.

Mrs. Moore *could speak—Very true*, however, was all she said, with a motion of her head that expressed the bow-approbatory.

For my part, said the jolly widow, staring with eyes as big as eggs, I know what I know—But Man and Wife *are* Man and Wife ; or they are *not* Man and Wife.—I have no notion of standing upon such niceties.

But here she comes ! cried one—hearing her chamber-door open—Here she comes ! another—hearing it shut after her—And down dropt the angel among us.

We all stood up, bowing and courtesying ; and could not help it. For she entered with such an air as commanded all our reverence. Yet the Captain look'd plaguy grave.

Cf. Pray keep your seats, Ladies—Pray do not go [For they made offers to withdraw ; yet Miss Rawlins

lins would have burst, had she been suffer'd to retire]. Before this time you have heard all my story, I make no doubt—Pray keep your seats—At least all Mr. Lovelace's.

A very saucy and whimsical beginning, thought I.

Capt. Tomlinson, your servant, addressing herself to him with inimitable dignity. I hope you did not take amiss my declining your visit yesterday. I was really incapable of talking upon any subject that required attention.

Capt. I am glad I see you better now, Madam, I hope I do.

Cl. Indeed I am not well. I would not have excused myself from attending you some hours ago, but in hopes I should have been better. I beg your pardon, Sir, for the trouble I have given you; and shall the rather expect it, as *this day will*, I hope, conclude it all.

Thus set! thus determin'd! thought I—Yet to have slept upon it!—But, as what she said was capable of a good, as well as a bad construction, I would not put an unfavourable one upon it.

Lovel. The Captain was sorry, my dear, he did not offer his attendance the moment he arrived yesterday. He was afraid that you took it amiss, that he did not.

Cl. Perhaps I thought that my uncle's friend might have wished to see me as soon as he came [How we stared!—But, Sir (to me), it might be convenient to you to detain him.

The devil, thought I!—So there really was resentment, as well as head-ach, as my good friend Mrs. Bevis observed, in her refusing to see the honest gentleman.

Capt. You *would* detain me, Mr. Lovelace—I was for paying my respects to the lady the moment I came—

Cl. Well, Sir [interrupting him], to wave this; for I would not be thought captious—If you have not suffer'd inconveniency, in being obliged to come again, I shall be easy.

Capt. [half-disconcerted] A *little*, I can't say but I have. I have, indeed, too many affairs upon my hands. But the desire I have to serve you and Mr. Lovelace, as well as to oblige my dear friend your uncle Harlowe, make great inconveniences but small ones.

Cl. You are very obliging, Sir.—Here is a great alteration since you parted with us last.

Capt. A great one indeed, Madam! I was very much surprised at it, on Thursday evening, when Mr. Lovelace conducted me to your lodgings, where we hoped to find you.

Cl. Have you any thing to say to me, Sir, from my uncle himself, that requires my *private* ear? Don't go, Ladies [for the women stood up, and offer'd to withdraw]:—If Mr. Lovelace stays, I am sure *you* may.

I frown'd. I bit my lip. I looked at the women; and shook my head.

Capt. I have nothing to offer, but what Mr. Lovelace is a party to, and may hear, except one private word or two, which may be postponed to the last.

Cl. Pray, Ladies, keep your seats.—Things are altered, Sir, since I saw you. You can mention nothing that relates to *me* now, to which *that gentleman* can be a party.

Capt. You surprise me, Madam! I am sorry to hear this!—Sorry for your *uncle's* sake!—Sorry for *your* sake!—Sorry for Mr. Lovelace's sake—And yet I am sure he must have given greater occasion than he has mentioned to me, or—

Lovel. Indeed, Captain, Indeed, Ladies, I have told you great part of my story!—And what I told you of my offence was the truth:—What I concealed

of

of my story was only what I apprehended would, if known, cause this dear creature to be thought more censorious than charitable.

C. Well, well, Sir, say what you please. Make me as black as you please. Make yourself as white as you can. I am not now in your power: That will comfort me for all.

Capt. God forbid that I should offer to plead in behalf of a crime, that a lady of virtue and honour cannot forgive. But surely, surely, Madam, this is going too far.

C. Do not blame me, *Capt. Tomlinson*. I have a good opinion of you, as my uncle's friend. But if you are Mr. Lovelace's friend, that is another thing; for my interests and Mr. Lovelace's must now be forever separated.

Capt. One word with you, Madam, if you please —offering to retire.

C. You may say all that you please to say before these gentlewomen. Mr. Lovelace may have secrets. I have none. You seem to think me faulty: I should be glad, that all the world knew my heart. Let my enemies sit in judgment upon my actions: Fairly scanned, I fear not the result. Let them even ask me my most secret thoughts, and, whether they make for me, or against me, I will reveal them.

Capt. Noble Lady! who can say as you say? The women held up their hands and eyes; each, as if she had said, Not I.

No disorder here, said Miss Rawlins! But (judging by her own heart) A confounded deal of improbability, I believe she thought.

Finely said, to be sure, said the widow Bevis, shrugging her shoulders.

Mrs. Moore sighed.

Jack Belford, thought I, knows all mine: And in this I am more ingenuous than any of the three, and a fit match for this paragon,

C.

Cl. How Mr. Lovelace has found me out here, I cannot tell. But such mean devices, such artful, such worse than Waltham disguises put on, to obtrude himself into my company; such bold, such shocking untruths—

Capt. The favour of but one word, Madam, in private—

Cl. In order to support a right which he has not over me!—O Sir, O Capt. Tomlinson!—I think I have reason to say, that the man is capable of any vileness!—

The women looked upon one another, and upon me, by turns, to see how I bore it. I had such dartings in my head at the instant, that I thought I should have gone distracted. My brain seemed on fire. What would I have given to have had her alone with me!—I traversed the room; my clenched fist to my forehead. O that I had any-body here, thought I, that, Hercules-like, when flaming in the tortures of Deianira's poison'd shirt, I could tear in pieces?

Capt. Dear Lady! see you not how the poor gentleman—Lord, how have I imposed upon your uncle, at this rate! How happy, did I tell him, I saw you! How happy I was sure you would be in each other!

Cl. Oh, Sir, you don't know how many premeditated offences I had forgiven when I saw you last, before I could appear to you, what I hoped then I might for the future be!—But now you may tell my uncle, if you please, that I cannot hope for his mediation. Tell him, that my guilt, in giving this man an opportunity to spirit me away from my try'd, my experienced, my natural friends, harshly as they treated me, stares me every day more and more in the face; and still the more, as my fate seems to be drawing to a crisis, according to the malediction of my offended father!

And

And then she burst into tears, which even affected that dog, who, brought to abet me, was himself all Belforded over.

The women, so used to cry without grief, as they are to laugh without reason, by mere force of example [confound their promptitudes!], must needs pull out *their* handkerchiefs. The less wonder, however, as I myself, between confusion, surprize, and concern, could hardly stand it.

What's a tender heart good for!—Who can be happy, that has a *feeling* heart?—And yet thou'l say, that he who has it not, must be a tyger, and no man.

Capt. Let me beg the favour of one word with you, Madam, in private; and that on my *own* account.

The women hereupon offered to retire. She insisted, that if *they* went, *I* should not stay.

Capt. Sir, bowing to me, shall I beg—

I hope, thought I, that I may trust this solemn dog, instructed as he is. She does not doubt him. I'll stay out no longer than to give her time to spend her first fire.

I then passively withdrew, with the women—But with such a bow to my goddess, that it won for me every heart but that I wanted *most* to win; for the haughty maid bent not her knee in return.

The conversation between the Captain and the Lady, when we were retired, was to the following effect: They both talked loud enough for me to hear them. The Lady from anger, the Captain with design; and, thou mayst be sure, there was no listener but myself. What I was imperfect in was supply'd afterwards; for I had my vellom-leav'd book, to note all down.—If she had known this, perhaps she would have been more sparing of her invectives—and but *perhaps* neither.

He told her, that as her brother was absolutely resolved to see her ; and as he himself, in compliance with her uncle's expedient, had reported her marriage ; and as that report had reached the ears of Lord M. Lady Betty, and the rest of my relations ; and as he had been obliged, in consequence of his first report, to vouch it ; and as her brother might find out where she was, and apply to the women here, for a confirmation or refutation of the marriage ; he had thought himself obliged to countenance the report before the women : That this had embarrassed him not a little, as he would not for the world that she should have cause to think him capable of prevarication, contrivance, or double-dealing : And that this made him desirous of a private conversation with her.

It was true, she said, she *had* given her consent to such an expedient, believing it was her *uncle's* ; and little thinking, that it would lead to so many errors. Yet she might have known, that one error is frequently the parent of many. Mr. Lovelace had made her sensible of the truth of that observation, on more occasions than one ; and it was an observation that he the Captain had made, in one of the letters that was shewn her yesterday (*a*).

He hoped, that she had no mistrust of *him*. That she had no doubts of *his honour*. If, Madam, you suspect me—If you think me capable—What a man—The Lord be merciful to me !—What a man must you think me !

I hope, Sir, there cannot be a man in the world, who could deserve to be suspected in such a case as this. I do *not* suspect you. If it were possible there could be *one* such man, I am sure, Capt. Tomlinson, a father of children, a man in years, of sense and experience, cannot be that man.

He

(a) Page 37. of this Volume.

He told me, that just then, he thought he felt a sudden flash from her eye, an *eye-beam*, as he called it, dart thro' his shivering reins; and he could not help trembling.

The dog's conscience, Jack! Nothing else!—I have felt half a dozen such flashes, such eye-beams, in as many different conversations with this soul-piercing beauty.

Her uncle, she must own, was not accustom'd to think of such expedients: But she had reconciled this to herself, as the case was unhappily uncommon; and by the regard he had for her honour.

This set the puppy's heart at ease, and gave him more courage.

She asked him, If he thought Lady Betty and Miss Montague intended her a visit?

He had no doubt but they did.

And does he imagine, said she, that I could be brought to countenance to them the report you have given out?

[*I had hoped to bring her to this, Jack, or she had not seen their letters. But I had told the Captain, that I believe I must give up this expectation.*]

No. He believed, that I had not such a thought. He was pretty sure, that I intended, when I saw them, to tell them (as in confidence) the naked truth.

He then told her, that her uncle had already made some steps towards a general reconciliation. The moment, Madam, that he knows you are really married, he will enter into conference with your *father* upon it; having actually expressed his desire to be reconciled to you, to your *mother*.

And what, Sir, said my mother? What said my dear mother? [with great emotion; holding out her sweet face, as the Captain described her, with the most earnest attention, as if she would shorten the

the way which his words were to have to her heart.]

Your mother, Madam, burst into tears upon it : And your uncle was so penetrated by *her* tenderness, that he could not proceed with the subject. But he intends to enter upon it with her in form, as soon as he hears that the ceremony is over.

By the tone of her voice she wept. The dear creature, thought I, begins to relent !—And I grudg'd the dog his eloquence. I could hardly bear the thought, that any man breathing should have the power, which I had lost, of persuading this high-soul'd lady, tho' in my own favour. And, wouldest thou think it ? this reflection gave me more uneasiness at the moment, than I felt from her reproaches, violent as they were ; or than I had pleasure in her supposed relenting. For there is beauty in every-thing she says and does : Beauty in her passion : Beauty in her tears !—Had the Captain been a young fellow, and of rank and fortune, his throat would have been in danger ; and I should have thought very hardly of her !

O Capt. Tomlinson, said she, you know not what I have suffer'd by this man's strange ways. He had, as I was not ashamed to tell him yesterday, a plain path before him. He at first betray'd me into his power : But when I *was* in it—There she stopt. Then resuming—O, Sir, you know not what a strange man he has been !—An unpolite, a rough-manner'd man !—In disgrace of his birth, and education, and knowlege, an unpolite man !—And so acting, as if his worldly and personal advantages set him above those graces which distinguish a gentleman.

The first woman that ever said or that ever thought so of me, that's my comfort, thought I !—But this (spoken to her *uncle's friend* behind my back) helps to heap up thy already too-full measure, dearest !—It is down in my vellom-book.

Ct. When I look back on his whole behaviour to a poor young creature (for I am but a *very* young creature), I cannot acquit him either of great folly, or of deep design.—And, last Wednesday—[There she stopt; and I suppose turn'd away her face. I wonder she was not ashamed to hint at what she thought so shameful; and that to a *man*, and *alone* with him.]

Capt. Far be it from me, Madam, to offer to enter too closely into so tender a subject. He owns, that you have reason to be displeased with him. But he so solemnly clears himself to me, of *premeditated* offence—

Ct. He cannot clear himself, Mr. Tomlinson. The people of the house must be very vile, as well as he. I am convinced, that there was a wicked confederacy—But no more upon such a subject.

Capt. Only one word more, Madam: He tells me, that he gave you such an instance of your power over him, as never man gave: And that you promised to pardon him.

Ct. He knew, that he deserved not pardon, or he had not extorted that promise from me. Nor had I given it to him, but to shield myself from the vilest outrage—

Capt. I could wish, Madam, inexcusable as his behaviour has been, since he has *something* to plead in the reliance he made upon your *promise*; that, for the sake of appearances to the world, and to avoid the mischiefs that may follow, if you absolutely break with him, you could prevail upon your naturally generous mind, to lay an obligation upon him by your forgiveness.

She was silent.

Capt. Your father and mother, Madam, deplore a daughter lost to them, whom your generosity to Mr. Lovelace may restore: Do not put it to the possible chance, that they may have cause to deplore a double

double loss ; the losing of a son, as well as a daughter, who, by his own violence, which you may perhaps prevent, may be for ever lost to them, and to the whole family.

She paused. She wept. She owned, that she felt the force of this argument.

I will be the making of this fellow, thought I !

Capt. Permit me, Madam, to tell you, that I do not think it would be difficult to prevail upon your uncle, if you insist upon it, to come up privately to town, and to give you with his own hand to Mr. Lovelace—Except, indeed, your present misunderstanding were to come to his ears.

Cl. But why, Sir, should I be so much afraid of my brother? My brother has injured *me*, not I *him*. Shall I seek protection from my brother of Mr. Lovelace? And who shall protect *me* from Mr. Lovelace?—Will the one offer to *me*, what the other has offer'd!—Wicked, ungrateful man! to insult a friendless, unprotected creature, made friendless by himself—I cannot, cannot think of him in the light I once thought of him. He has no business with *me*. Let *him* leave *me*. Let my brother find *me*. I am not such a poor creature, as to be afraid to face the brother who has injured *me*.

Capt. Were you and your brother to meet only to confer together, to expostulate, to clear up difficulties, it were another thing. But what, Madam, can you think will be the issue of an interview (Mr. Solmes with him), when he finds you *unmarried*, and resolved never to have Mr. Lovelace; supposing Mr. Lovelace were *not* to interfere; which cannot be supposed?

Cl. Well, Sir, I can only say, I am a very unhappy creature!—I must resign to the will of Providence, and be patient under evils, which *that* will not permit me to shun. But I have taken my measures. Mr. Lovelace can never make *me* happy, nor
I *him*.

I him. I wait here only for a letter from Miss Howe,
That must determine me—

Determine you as to Mr. Lovelace, Madam? in-
terrupted the Captain.

Ct. I am already determin'd as to him.

Capt. If it be not in his favour, I have done. I
cannot use stronger arguments than I have used, and
it would be impertinent to repeat them.—If you can-
not forgive his offence, I am sure it must have been
much greater than he has owned to me.—If you are
absolutely determined, be pleased to let me know
what I shall say to your uncle? You was pleased to
tell me, that this day would put an end to what you
called my trouble: I should not have thought it any,
could I have been an humble means of reconciling
persons of worth and honour to each other.

Here I enter'd with a solemn air.

Lovel. Mr. Tomlinson, I have heard a great part
of what has pass'd between you and this unforgiving,
however otherwise excellent lady. I am cut to the
heart to find the dear creature so determined. I could
not have believed it possible, with such prospects,
that I had so little a share in her esteem. Never-
theless I must do myself justice with regard to the
offence I was so unhappy as to give, since I find you
are ready to think it much greater than it really was.

Ct. I hear not, Sir, your recapitulations. I am,
and ought to be, the sole judge of insults offered to
my person. I enter not into discussion with you,
nor hear you on the shocking subject. And was going.

I put myself between her and the door—You *may*
hear all I have to say, Madam. My *fault* is not of
such a nature, but that you *may*. I will be a just
accuser of myself; and will not wound your ears.

I then protested that the fire was a real fire [So it
was]. I disclaimed [less truly indeed] premedita-
tion. I owned that I was hurried on by the vio-
lence of a youthful passion, and by a sudden impulse,

which

which few other persons, in the like situation, would have been able to check: That I withdrew, at her command and intreaty, on the promise of *pardon*, without having offered the least indecency, or any freedom, that would not have been forgiven by persons of delicacy, surprised in an attitude so charming—Her terror, on the alarm of fire, calling for a soothing behaviour, and personal tenderness, she being ready to fall into fits: My hoped-for happy day so near, that I might be presumed to be looked upon as a betrothed lover—And that this excuse might be pleaded even for the women of the house, that they, thinking us actually married, might suppose themselves to be the less concerned to interfere on so tender an occasion—There, Jack, was a bold insinuation in behalf of the women!

High indignation filled her disdainful eye, eye-beam after eye-beam flashing at me. Every feature of her sweet face had soul in it. Yet she spoke not. Perhaps, Jack, she had a thought, that this *plea for the women* accounted for my contrivance to have her pass to them as married, when I first carried her thither.

Capt. Indeed, Sir, I must say, that you did not well to add to the apprehensions of a lady so much terrified before.

She offer'd to go by me. I set my back against the door, and besought her to stay a few moments. I had not said thus much, my dearest creature, but for your sake, as well as for my own, that Captain Tomlinson should not think I had been viler than I was. Nor will I say one word more on the subject, after I have appealed to your own heart, whether it was not necessary, that I should say so much; and to the Captain, whether otherwise he would not have gone away with a much worse opinion of me, if he

had judged of my offence by the violence of your resentment.

Capt. Indeed I *should*. I *own* I should. And I am very glad, Mr. Lovelace, that you are able to defend yourself thus far.

Cl. That cause must be well tried, where the offender takes his seat upon the same bench with the judge.—I submit not mine to men—Nor, give me leave to say, to You, Captain Tomlinson, tho' I am willing to have a good opinion of you. Had not the man been assured, that he had influenced you in his favour, he would not have brought you up to Hamstead.

Capt. That I am *influenced*, as you call it, Madam, is for the sake of your uncle, and for your own sake, more (I will say to Mr. Lovelace's face) than for his. What can I have in view, but peace and reconciliation? I have, from the *first*, blamed, and I now, *again*, blame, Mr. Lovelace, for adding distress to distress, and terror to terror; the lady, as you acknowlege, Sir [*looking valiantly*], ready before to fall into fits.

Lovel. Let me own to you, Captain Tomlinson, that I have been a very faulty, a very foolish man; and, if this dear creature *ever* honoured me with her love, an *ingrateful* one. But I have had too much reason to doubt it. And this is now a flagrant proof that she never had the value for me which my proud heart wished for, that, with such prospects before us; a day so near; settlements approved and drawn; her uncle mediating a reconciliation, which, for her sake, not *my own*, I was desirous to give into; she can, for an offence so *really* slight, on an occasion so *truly* accidental, renounce me for ever; and, with me, all hopes of that reconciliation in the way her uncle had put it in, and she had acquiesced with; and

risque

risque all consequences, fatal ones as they may too possibly be.—By my soul, Captain Tomlinson, the dear creature must have hated me all the time she was intending to honour me with her hand. And now she must resolve to abandon me, as far as I know, with a preference in her heart of the most odious of men—in favour of *that Solmes*, who, as you tell me, accompanies her brother: And with what hopes, with what view, accompanies him?—How can I bear to think of this?—

C. It is fit, Sir, that you should judge of my regard for you, by your own conscious demerits. Yet you know, or you would not have dared to behave to me as sometimes you did, that you had more of it than you deserved.

She walked from us; and then returning, Captain Tomlinson, said she, I will own to you, that I was not capable of resolving to give my *hand*, and—*nothing but my hand*.—Have I not given a flagrant proof of this to the once most indulgent of parents? which has brought me into a distress, which this man has heightened, when he ought, in gratitude and honour, to have endeavoured to render it supportable. I had even a *byas*, Sir, in his favour, I scruple not to own it. Long, too long! bore I with his unaccountable ways, attributing his errors to unmeaning gaiety, and to a want of knowing what true delicacy, and true generosity, required from a heart susceptible of grateful impressions to one involved by his means in unhappy circumstances. It is now *wickedness* in him (a wickedness which discredits all his *professions*) to say, that his last cruel and ingrateful insult was not a *premeditated one*.—But what need I say more of this insult, when it was of such a nature, that it has changed that *byas* in his favour, and made me choose to forego all the inviting prospects he

talks of, and to run all hazards, to free myself from his power?

O my dearest creature! how happy for us both, had I been able to *discover that byas*, as you descend to call it, thro' such reserves as man never encountered with!—

He did *discover* it, Captain Tomlinson. He brought me, *more than once*, to own it; the more needlessly brought me to own it, as I dare say his own vanity gave him no cause to doubt it; and as I had no other motive in not being forward to own it, than my too just apprehensions of his want of generosity. In a word, Captain Tomlinson (and now, that I am determined upon my measures, I the less scruple to say it), I should have despised myself, had I found myself capable of affectation or tyranny to the man I intended to marry. I have always blamed the dearest friend I have in the world for a fault of this nature. In a word—

Lovel. And had my angel really and indeed the favour for me she is pleased to own?—Dearest creature, forgive me. Restore me to your good opinion. Surely I have not sinned beyond forgiveness. You say, that I extorted from you the promise you made me. But I could not have presumed to make that promise the condition of my obedience, had I not thought there was room to expect forgiveness. Permit, I beseech you, the prospects to take place, that were opening so agreeably before us. I will go to town, and bring the licence. All difficulties to the obtaining of it are surmounted. Captain Tomlinson shall be witness to the deeds. He will be present at the ceremony on the part of your uncle. Indeed he gave me hope, that your uncle himself—

Capt. I did, Mr. Lovelace: And I will tell you my grounds for the hope I gave. I proposed to my

dear friend (Your uncle, Madam), that he should give out, that he would take a turn with me to my little farm-house, as I call it, near Northampton, for a week or so.—Poor gentleman! he has of late been very little abroad! Too visibly indeed declining!—Change of air, it might be given out, was good for him.—But I see, Madam, that this is too tender a subject—

The dear creature wept. She knew how to apply, as meant, the Captain's hint to the occasion of her uncle's declining state of health.

Capt. We might indeed, I told him, set out in that road, but turn short to town *in my chariot*; and he might see the ceremony performed with his own eyes, and be the desired father, as well as the beloved uncle.

She turned from us, and wiped her eyes.

Capt. And, really, there seem now to be but two objections to this; as Mr. Harlowe discouraged not the proposal.—The one, the unhappy misunderstanding between you; which I would not by any means he should know; since then he might be apt to give weight to Mr. James Harlowe's unjust surmizes.—The other, that it would necessarily occasion some delay to the ceremony; which I cannot see, but may be performed in a day or two—if—

And then he reverently bowed to my goddess.—Charming fellow!—But often did I curse my stars, for making me so much obliged to his adroitness.

She was going to speak; but, not liking the turn of her countenance (altho', as I thought, its severity and indignation seemed a little abated), I said, and had like to have blown myself up by it—One expedient I have just thought of—

Cl. None of your expedients, Mr. Lovelace! I abhor your expedients, your inventions—I have had too many of them.

Lovel. See, Capt. Tomlinson!—See, Sir—O how we expose ourselves to you!—Little did you think, I dare say, that we have lived in such a continued misunderstanding together! But you will make the best of it all. We may yet be happy. O that I could have been assured, that this dear lady loved me with the hundredth part of the love I have for her!—Our diffidences have been mutual. This dear creature has too much *punctilio*: I am afraid, that I have too little. Hence our difficulties. But I have a heart, Capt. Tomlinson, a heart, that bids me hope for her love, because it is resolved to deserve it, as much as man *can* deserve it.

Capt. I am indeed surprised at what I have seen and heard. I defend not Mr. Lovelace, Madam, in the offence he has given you—As a father of daughters myself, I *cannot* defend him, tho' his fault seems to be lighter than I had apprehended—But in my conscience I think, that you, Madam, carry your resentment too high.

Cl. Too high, Sir!—Too high, to the man that might have been happy if he would!—Too high to the man that has held *my soul in suspense* an hundred times, since (by artifice and deceit) he obtained a power over me!—Say, Lovelace, thyself say, Art thou not the *very* Lovelace, that, by insulting *me*, hast wrong'd thy *own hopes*?—The wretch that appeared in vile disguises, personating an old lame creature, seeking for lodgings for thy sick wife?—Telling the gentlewomen here, stories all of thy own invention; and asserting to them an husband's right over me, which thou hadst not?—And is it (turning to the Captain) to be expected, that I should give credit to the protestations of such a man?

Lovel. Treat me, dearest creature, as you please, I will bear it: And yet your scorn and your violence have fixed daggers in my heart—But was it possible, without

without those disguises, to come at your speech?—And could I lose you, if study, if invention, would put it in my power to arrest your anger, and give me hope to engage you to confirm to me the *promised pardon*?—The address I made to you before the women, as if the marriage-ceremony had passed, was in consequence of what your uncle *had advised*, and what *you had acquiesced with*; and the rather made, as your brother, and Singleton, and Solmes, were resolved to find out whether what was reported of your marriage were true or not, that they might take their measures accordingly; and in hopes to prevent that mischief, which I have been but too studious to prevent, since this tameness has but invited insolence from your brother and his confederates.

Ci. O thou strange wretch, how thou talkest!—But, Captain Tomlinson, give me leave to say, that, were I inclin'd to talk any farther upon this subject, I would appeal to Miss Rawlins's judgment (Who else have I to appeal to?); she seems to be a person of prudence and honour; but not to any *man's* judgment, whether I carry my resentment beyond fit bounds, when I resolve—

Capt. Forgive, Madam, the interruption—But I think there can be no reason for this. You ought, as you said, to be the *sole judge* of indignities offered you. The gentlewomen here are strangers to you. You will perhaps stay but a little while among them. If you lay the state of your case before any of them, and your brother come to inquire of them, your uncle's intended mediation will be discover'd, and rendered abortive—I shall appear in a light that I never appeared in, in my life—for these women may not think themselves obliged to keep the secret.

Ci. O what difficulties has one fatal step involved me in!—But there is no necessity for such an appeal. I am resolved on my measures.

Capt. *Absolutely resolved, Madam?*

Cl. *I am.*

Capt. *What shall I say to your uncle Harlowe, Madam?—Poor gentleman! how will he be surprised!—You see, Mr. Lovelace—You see, Sir—turning to me, with a flourishing hand—But you may thank yourself—and admirably stalk'd he from us.*

True, by my soul, thought I. I traversed the room, and bit my unpersuasive lips, now upper, now under, for vexation.

He made a profound reverence to her—And went to the window, where lay his hat and whip; and, taking them up, open'd the door. Child, said he, to somebody he saw, pray, order my servant to bring my horse to the door—

Lovel. You won't go, Sir—I hope you won't!—I am the unhappiest man in the world!—You won't go—Yet, alas!—But you won't go, Sir!—There may be yet hopes, that Lady Betty may have some weight—

Capt. Dear Mr. Lovelace; and may not my worthy friend, an affectionate uncle, hope for some influence upon his daughter-niece?—But I beg pardon—A letter will always find me disposed to serve the lady, and that as well for her sake, as for the sake of my dear friend.

She had thrown herself into a chair; her eyes cast down: She was motionless, as in a profound study.

The Captain bowed to her again: But met with no return to his bow. *Mr. Lovelace,* said he (with an air of equality and independence), *I am Yours.*

Still the dear unaccountable sat as immovable as a statue; stirring neither hand, foot, head, nor eye—I never before saw any one in so profound a reverie, in so waking a dream.

He passed by her to go out at the door she sat near, tho' the other door was his direct way; and bowed

bowed again. She moved not. I will not disturb the lady in her meditations, Sir.—Adieu, Mr. Lovelace—*No farther, I beseech you.*

She started, sighing—Are you going, Sir?

Capt. I am, Madam. I could have been glad to do you service: But I see it is not in my power.

She stood up, holding out one hand, with inimitable dignity and sweetness—I am sorry you are going, Sir—I can't help it—I have no friend to advise with—Mr. Lovelace has the art (or good-fortune, perhaps, I should call it) to make himself many.—Well, Sir—if you will go, I can't help it.

Capt. I will not go, Madam, his eyes twinkling [Again seized with a fit of humanity!]. I will not go, if my longer stay can do you either service or pleasure. What, Sir (turning to me), what, Mr. Lovelace, was your expedient?—Perhaps something may be offer'd, Madam—

She sighed, and was silent.

REVENGE, invoked I to myself, keep thy throne in my heart—If the usurper LOVE once more drive thee from it, thou wilt never regain possession!

Lovel. What I had thought of, what I had intended to propose, and I sigh'd—was this, That the dear creature, if she will not forgive me, as she promised, would suspend the displeasure she has conceived against me, till Lady Betty arrives.—That lady may be the mediatrix between us. This dear creature may put herself into her protection, and accompany her down to her seat in Oxfordshire. It is one of her Ladyship's purposes to prevail on her supposed new niece to go down with her. It may pass to every one but to Lady Betty, and to you, *Capt. Tomlinson*, and to your friend Mr. Harlowe (as he desires), that we have been some time married: And her being with my relations, will amount to a proof to James Harlowe, that we are; and our nuptials may

be privately, and at this beloved creature's pleasure, solemnized ; and your report, Captain, authenticated.

Capt. Upon my honour, Madam, clapping his hand upon his breast, a charming expedient ! This will answer every end.

She mused—She was greatly perplexed—At last, God direct me, said she ! I know not what to do—A young unfriended creature, whom have I to advise with ?—Let me retire, if I can retire.

She withdrew with slow and trembling feet, and went up to her chamber.

For Heaven's sake, said the penetrated varlet, his hands lifted up, for Heaven's sake, take compassion upon this admirable lady !—I cannot proceed—I cannot proceed — She deserves all things—

Softly !—damn the fellow !—The women are coming in.

He sobb'd up his grief—turn'd about—hemm'd up a more *manly* accent—Wipe thy cursed eyes—He did. The sunshine took place on one cheek, and spread slowly to the other, and the fellow had his whole face again.

The women all three came in, led by that ever-curious Miss Rawlins. I told them, that the lady was gone up to consider of every-thing : That we had hopes of her. And such a representation we made of all that had passed, as brought either tacit or declared blame upon the fair perverse, for hardness of heart, and over-delicacy.

The widow Bevis, in particular, put out one lip, tossed up her head, wrinkled her forehead, and made such motions with her now-lifted-up, now cast-down eyes, as shew'd, that she thought there was a great deal of perverseness and affectation in the lady. Now-and-then she changed her censuring looks to looks of pity of me—But (as she said) She loved not to aggravate !—A poor business, *God help's !* shrugging up her

her shoulders, to make such a rout about ! and then her eyes laugh'd heartily — Indulgence was a good thing ! Love was a good thing !—But too much was too much !

Miss Rawlins, however, declared, after she had called the Widow Bevis, with a prudish simper, a *comical gentlewoman* ! That there must be something in our story, which she could not fathom ; and went from us into a corner, and sat down, seemingly vexed that she could not.

LETTER XIII.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

THE lady staying longer above than we wished ; and hoping that (lady-like) she only waited for an invitation to return to us ; I desired the Widow Bevis, in the Captain's name (who wanted to go to town), to request the favour of her company.

I cared not to send up either Miss Rawlins or Mrs. Moore on the errand, lest my beloved should be in a *communicative disposition* ; especially as she had hinted at an appeal to Miss Rawlins ; who, besides, has such an unbounded curiosity.

Mrs. Bevis presently return'd with an answer (winking and pinking at me), that the lady would follow her down. Miss Rawlins could not but offer to retire, as the others did. Her eyes, however, intimated that she had rather stay. But they not being answer'd as she seemed to wish, she went with the rest, but with flower feet ; and had hardly left the parlour, when the lady enter'd it by the other door ; a melancholy dignity in her person and air.

She sat down. Pray, Mr. Tomlinson, be seated. He took his chair over against her. I stood behind hers, that I might give him *agreed-upon* signals, should there be occasion for them.

As thus—A wink of the left-eye was to signify,
Push that point, Captain.

A wink of the right, and a nod, was to indicate
Approbation of what he had said.

My fore-finger held up, and biting my lip, *Get off
of that, as fast as possible.*

A right-forward nod, and a frown—*Swear to it,
Captain.*

My whole spread hand, *To take care not to say too
much on that particular subject.*

And these motions I could make, even those with
my hand, without holding up my arm, or moving
my wrist, had the women been there; as, when they
were agreed upon, I knew not but they would.

A scouling brow, and a positive nod, was to bid
him *rise in his temper.*

She hemm'd—I was going to speak, to spare her
supposed confusion: But this lady never wants pre-
sence of mind, when presence of mind is necessary
either to her honour, or to that conscious digni-
ty which distinguishes her from all the women I
ever knew.

I have been considering, said she, as well as I was
able, of every thing that has passed; and of all that
has been said; and of my unhappy situation. I mean
no ill; I wish no ill, to any creature living, Mr.
Tomlinson. I have always delighted to draw fa-
vourable rather than unfavourable conclusions, some-
times, as it has proved, for very bad hearts. Cen-
soriusness, whatever faults I have, is not *naturally*
my fault.—But, circumstanced as I am; treated as I
have been, unworthily treated by a man who is full
of contrivances, and glories in them—

Lovel. My dearest life!—But I will not interrupt
you.

Cf. Thus treated, it becomes me to doubt—It
concerns my honour to doubt, to fear, to apprehend—

Your

Your intervention, Sir, is so seasonable, so kind, for this man — My uncle's expedient, the first of the kind he ever, I believe, thought of ; a plain, honest, good-minded man, as he is, not affecting such expedients — Your report in conformity to it — The consequences of that report ; The alarm taken by my brother ; His rash resolution upon it — The alarm taken by Lady Betty, and the rest of Mr. Lovelace's relations — The sudden letters written to him, upon it, which, with yours, he shew'd me — All ceremony, among persons born observers of ceremony, and intitled to value themselves upon their distinction — All these things have happen'd so quick, and some of them so seasonable —

Lovel. Lady Betty, you see, Madam, in her letter, dispenses with punctilio, avowedly in compliment to you. Charlotte, in hers, professes to do the same for the same reason. Good Heaven, that the respect intended you by my relations, who, in every other case, are really punctilious, should be thus construed ! They were glad, Madam, to have an opportunity to compliment you at my expence. Every one of my family takes delight in raillyng me. But their joy on the supposed occasion —

C. Do I doubt, Sir, that you have not something to say, for any-thing you think fit to do ? — I am speaking to Captain Tomlinson, Sir. — I wish you would be pleased to withdraw — At least to come from behind my chair.

And she looked at the Captain, observing, no doubt, that his eyes seemed to take lessons from mine.

A fair match, by Jupiter !

The Captain was disconcerted. The dog had not had such a blush upon his face for ten years before. I bit my lip for vexation : Walk'd about the room ; but nevertheless took my post again ; and blink'd with

with my eyes to the Captain, as a caution for him to take more care of *his*: And then scouling with my brows, and giving the nod positive, I as good as said, *Resent that, Captain.*

Capt. I hope, Madam, you have no suspicion, that I am capable—

Ci. Be not displeased with me, Captain Tomlinson. I have told you, that I am not of a suspicious temper. Excuse me for the sake of my sincerity. There is not, I will be bold to say, a sincerer heart in the world, than hers before you.

She took out her handkerchief, and put it to her eyes.

I was going at the instant, after her example, to vouch for the honesty of *my* heart; but my conscience *Mennell'd* upon me; and would not suffer the meditated vow to pass my lips.—A devilish thing, thought I, for a man to be so little himself, when he has most occasion for himself!

The villain Tomlinson look'd at me with a rueful face, as if he begg'd leave to cry for company. It might have been as well, if he *had* cried. A feeling heart, or the tokens of it, given by a sensible eye, are very reputable things, when kept in countenance by the occasion.

And here let me fairly own to thee, that twenty times in this trying conversation I said to myself, that could I have thought, that I should have all this trouble, and incur'd all this guilt, I would have been honest at first. But why, question'd I, is this dear creature so lovely?—Yet so invincible?—Ever heardst thou before, that the sweets of May blossom'd in December?

Capt. Be pleased—be pleased, Madam—if you have doubts of my honour—

A whining varlet! He shoud have been quite angry—For what gave I him the nod positive? He shoud

should have stalk'd to the window, as for his whip and hat.

Cl. I am only making such observations as my youth, my inexperience, and my present unhappy circumstances, suggest to me—A worthy heart (such, I hope, is Captain Tomlinson's) need not fear an examination—need not fear being looked into—Whatever doubt *that* man, who has been the cause of my errors, and, as my severe father imprecated, the punisher of the errors he has caused, might have had of me, or of my honour, I would have forgiven him for them, if he had fairly proposed them to me: For he might, perhaps, have had some doubt of the future conduct of a creature, whom he could induce to correspond with him against parental prohibition, and against the lights which her own judgment threw in upon her: And if he had propounded them to me like a man and a gentleman, I would have been glad of the opportunity given me to clear my intentions, and to have shewn myself intitled to his good opinion—And I hope you, Sir—

Capt. I am ready to hear all your doubts, Madam, and to clear them up—

Cl. I can only put it, Sir, to your conscience and honour—

The dog sat uneasy: He shifted his feet: Her eye was upon him; he was therefore, after the rebuff he had met with, afraid to look at me for my motions; and now turn'd his eyes towards me, then from me, as if he would *unlock* his own looks; his head turning about like a weathercock in a hurricane.

Cl. —That all is true, that you have written, and that you have told me.

I gave him a right-forward nod, and a frown—as much as to say, *Swear to it, Captain.* But the varlet did not round it off as I would have had him. However, he averr'd that it was.

He

He had hoped, he said, that the circumstances with which his commission was attended, and what he had communicated to her, which he could not know but from his dear friend her uncle, might have shielded him even from the *shadow* of suspicion—But I am contented, said he, stammering, to be thought—to be thought—what—what you please to think me—till, till, you are satisfied—

A whore's-bird !

Ci. The circumstances you refer to, I must own, ought to shield you, Sir, from suspicion—But the man before you is a man that would make an angel suspected, should that angel plead for him.

I came forward. Travers'd the room—Was indeed in a bloody passion—I have no patience, Madam! —And again I bit my unpersuasive lip—

Ci. No man ought to be impatient at imputations he is not ashame'd to deserve. An innocent man *will not* be outrageous upon such imputations. A guilty man *ought not*. [Most excellently would this charming creature cap sentences with Lord M.!] But I am not now trying you, Sir, on the foot of your *merits*. I am only sorry, that I am constrained to put questions to this *worthier* gentleman, which perhaps I ought not to put, so far as they regard *himself*.—And I hope, Captain Tomlinson, that you, who know not Mr. Lovelace so well, as, to my unhappiness, I do, and who have children of your own, will excuse a poor young creature, who is deprived of all worthy protection, and who has been insulted and endangered, by the most *designing* man in *the world*, and perhaps by a confederacy of his creatures.

There she stopt; and stood up, and looked at me; fear, nevertheless, apparently mingled with her anger. And so it ought. I was glad, however, of this poor

poor sign of love—No one fears whom they value not.

Womens tongues were licensed, I was going to say—But my conscience would not let me call her a *woman*; nor use to her so vulgar a phrase. I could only rave by my motions; lift up my eyes, spread my hands, rub my face, pull my wig, and look like a fool. Indeed, I had a great mind to run mad. Had I been alone with her, I would; and she should have taken consequences.

The Captain interposed in my behalf; gently, however, and as a man not quite sure that he was himself acquitted. Some of the pleas we had both insisted on, he again inforced—And, speaking low—Poor gentleman! said he, who can but pity him!—Indeed, Madam, it is easy to see, with all his failings, the power you have over him!

Cl. I have no pleasure, Sir, in distressing any one.—Not even *him*, who has so much distressed me.—But, Sir, when I ~~THINK~~, and when I see him before me, I cannot command my temper!—Indeed, indeed, Captain Tomlinson, Mr. Lovelace has not acted by me either as a grateful, a generous, or a prudent man!—He knows not, as I told him yesterday, the value of the heart he has insulted!

There the angel stopt; her handkerchief at her eyes!

O Belford, Belford! that she should so greatly excel, as to make me, at times, a villain in my own eyes!

I besought her pardon. I promised, that it should be the study of my whole life to deserve it. My faults, I said, *whatever* they had been, were rather faults in her *apprehension*, than in *fact*. I besought her to give way to the expedient I had hit upon—I repeated it. The Captain inforced it, for her uncle's sake. I, once more, for the sake of the general reconciliation;

tion ; for the sake of all my family ; for the sake of preventing future mischief—

She wept—She seemed stagger'd in her resolution—She turned from me. I mention'd the letter of Lord M. I besought her to resign to Lady Betty's mediation all our differences, if she would not forgive me before she saw her.

She turned towards me—She was going to speak ; but her heart was full—And again she turned away her face—Then, half turning it to me, her handkerchief at her eyes—And do you *really* and *indeed* expect Lady Betty and Miss Montague ?—And do you—Again she stopt—

I answer'd in a solemn manner.

She turned from me her whole face, and paused, and seemed to consider. But, in a passionate accent, again turning towards me [O how difficult, Jack, for a Harlowe spirit to forgive !]—Let her Ladyship come, if she pleases, said she—I cannot, cannot wish to *see* her—And if she plead for you, I cannot wish to *hear* her !—The more I *think*, the less can I forgive an attempt, that I am convinced was intended to *destroy* me. [A plaguy strong word for the occasion, supposing she was right !] What has my conduct been, that an insult of *such* a nature should be offer'd to me, as it would be a *weakness* to forgive ? I am sunk in my own eyes !—And how can I receive a visit that must depress me more ?

The Captain urged her in my favour with greater earnestness than before. We both even clamour'd, as I may say, for mercy and forgiveness. [Didst thou never hear the good folks talk of taking heaven by storm ?]—Contrition repeatedly avowed—A total reformation promised—The happy expedient again pleaded—

C. I have taken my measures. I have gone too far to recede, or to *wish* to recede. My mind is prepared

pared for adversity. That I have not deserved the evils I have met with, is my consolation!—I have written to Miss Howe what my intentions are. My heart is not with you—it is *against* you, Mr. Lovelace. I had not written to you, as I did, in the letter I left behind me, had I not resolved, whatever became of me, to renounce you for ever.

I was full of hope now. Severe as her expressions were, I saw she was afraid, that I should think of what she had written. And indeed, her letter is violence itself. *Angry people, Jack, should never write while their passion holds.*

Lovel. The severity you have shewn me, Madam, whether by pen or by speech, shall never have place in my remembrance, but for your honour. In the light you have taken things, all is deserved, and but the natural result of virtuous resentment; and I adore you, even for the pangs you have given me.

She was silent. She had employment enough with her handkerchief at her eyes.

Lovel. You lament sometimes, that you have no friends of your own sex to consult with. Miss Rawlins, I must confess, is too inquisitive to be confided in [I lik'd not, thou mayest think, her appeal to Miss Rawlins]. She *may* mean well. But I never in my life knew a person who was fond of prying into the secrets of others, that was fit to be trusted. The curiosity of such is govern'd by pride, which is not gratified but by whispering about a secret till it becomes public, in order to shew either their consequence, or their sagacity. It is so in every case. What man or woman, who is covetous of power, or of wealth, is covetous of either, for the sake of making a right use of it?—But in the ladies of my family you *may* confide. It is their ambition to think of you, as one of themselves. Renew but your consent to pass to the world, for the sake of your uncle's expedient,

expedient, and for the prevention of mischief, as a lady some time married. Lady Betty may be acquainted with the naked truth ; and you may (as she hopes you will) accompany her to her seat ; and, if it *must* be so, consider me as in a state of penitence or probation, to be accepted or rejected, as I may appear to deserve.

The Captain again clapt his hand on his breast, and declared upon his honour, that this was a proposal, that, were the case that of his own daughter, and she were not resolved upon *immediate* marriage (which yet he thought by far the more eligible choice), he should be very much concerned, were she to refuse it.

Cl. Were I with Mr. Lovelace's relations, and to pass as his wife to the world, I could not have any choice. And how could he be then in a state of probation ? O Mr. Tomlinson, you are too much his *friend* to see into his drift.

Capt. His friend, Madam, as I said before, as I am *yours* and your *uncle's*, for the sake of a general reconciliation, which must begin with a better understanding between yourselves.

Lovel. Only, my dearest life, resolve to attend the arrival and visit of Lady Betty : And permit her to arbitrate between us.

Capt. There can be no harm in *that*, Madam— You can suffer no inconvenience from *that*. If Mr. Lovelace's offence be such, that a lady of that lady's character judges it to be unpardonable, why then—

Cl. (interrupting ; and to me) If am not invaded by you, Sir—if I am (as I ought to be) my own mistress, I think to stay here, in this *honest house* [And then had I an *eye-beam*, as the Captain calls it, flash'd at me], till I receive a letter from Miss Howe. That, I hope, will be in a day or two. If in that time the ladies come whom you expect, and if they are desirous

desirous to see the creature whom you have made unhappy, I shall know whether I can, or cannot, receive their visit.

She turn'd short to the door, and retiring, went up stairs to her chamber.

O Sir, said the Captain, as soon as she was gone, what an angel of a woman is this!—I *have been*, and I *am*, a very wicked man.—But if any thing should happen amiss to this admirable lady, thro' my means, I shall have more cause for self-reproach, than for all the bad actions of my life put together.

And his eyes glisten'd.

Nothing can happen amiss, thou sorrowful dog!—What *can* happen amiss?—Are we to form our opinion of things by the romantic notions of a girl, who supposes *that* to be the greatest which is the slightest of evils? Have I not told thee our whole story? Has she not broken her promise? Did I not generously spare her, when in my power? I was decent, tho' I had her at such advantage. Greater liberties have I taken with girls of character at a common romping-bout, and all has been laugh'd off, and handkerchief and headcloaths adjusted, and petticoats shaken to rights, in my presence. Never man, in the like circumstances, and resolved as I was resolved, goaded on as I was goaded on, as well by her own sex, as by the impulses of a violent passion, was ever so decent. Yet what mercy does she shew me?

Now, Jack, this pitiful dog was such another unfortunate one as thyself—His arguments serving to confirm me in the very purpose, he brought them to prevail upon me to give up. Had he left me to myself, to the tenderness of my own nature, moved as I was when the lady withdrew, and had sat down, and made odious faces, and said nothing; it is very possible, that I should have taken the chair over-against him, which she had quitted; and have cry'd and

and blubber'd with him for half an hour together. But the varlet to *argue* with me ! To pretend to *convince* a man, who knows in his heart that he is doing a wrong thing !—He must needs think, that this would put me upon trying what I could say for myself ; and when the excited compunction can be carried from the heart to the lips, it must evaporate in words.

Thou perhaps, in this place, wouldst have urged the same pleas that he urged. What I answer'd to him therefore may do for thee, and spare thee the trouble of writing, and me of reading, a good deal of nonsense.

Capt. You was pleased to tell me, Sir, that you only proposed to try her virtue ; and that you believed you should actually marry her.

Lovel. So I shall, and cannot help it. I have no doubt but I shall. And as to *trying* her, is she not now in the height of her trial ? Have I not reason to think, that she is coming about ? Is she not now yielding up her resentment for an attempt which she thinks she ought *not* to forgive ?—And if she do, may she not forgive the *last attempt* ?—Can she, in a word, resent *that* more than she does *this* ?—Women often, for their own sakes, will keep the *last secret* ; but will ostentatiously din the ears of gods and men with their clamours upon a successless offer. It was my folly, my weakness, that I gave her not more cause for this her unsparing violence !

Capt. O Sir, you never will be able to subdue this lady without force.

Lovel. Well, then, puppy, must I not endeavour to find a proper time and place—

Capt. Forgive me, Sir ! But can you think of force to such a fine creature ?

Lovel. Force, indeed, I abhor the thought of ; and for what, thinkest thou, have I taken all the pains

I have taken, and engaged so many persons in my cause, but to avoid the necessity of *violent compulsion*? But yet, imaginest thou that I expect *direct consent* from such a lover of forms, as this lady is known to be? Let me tell thee, Mc Donald, that thy master Belford has urged on thy side of the question, all that thou canst urge. Must I have every puppy's conscience to pacify, as well as my own?—By my soul, Patrick, she has a friend *here* (clapping my hand on my breast) that pleads for her with greater and more irresistible eloquence, than all the men in the world can plead for her. And had she not escaped me?—And yet how have I answer'd my first design of trying her (*a*), and in *her* the virtue of the most virtuous of the sex? — Thou puppy! Wouldst thou have me decline a trial that may make for the honour of a sex we all so dearly love?

Then, Sir, you have no thoughts—no thoughts—(looking still more sorrowfully) of marrying this wonderful lady?

Yes, puppy, but I have. But let me, first, to gratify *my* pride, bring down *hers*. Let me see, that she loves me well enough to forgive me for my *own* sake. Has she not heretofore lamented, that she staid not in her father's house, tho' the consequence must have been, if she *had*, that she would have been the wife of the odious Solmes? If now she be brought to consent to be mine, seest thou not, that the *reconciliation* with her *detested relations* is the *inducement*, as it *always* was, and not *love of me*?— Neither her virtue nor her love can be established but upon full trial; the *last* trial—But if her resistance and resentment be such as hitherto I have reason to expect they will be, and if I find in that resentment less of hatred of *me*, than of the *fact*, then shall she be mine in her own way. Then, hateful as is the *life of shackles* to me, will I marry her.

(a) Vol. iii. Letter xvii. p. 110, & seq.

Well

Well, Sir, I can only say, that I am dough in your hands, to be moulded into what shape you please. But if, as I said before ----

None of your *said-s-before*. I remember all thou saidst --- And I know all thou canst *further* say --- Thou art only, Pontius Pilate like, washing thine own hands (don't I know thee?), that thou mayst have something to silence thy conscience with by loading me. But we have gone too far to recede. Are not all our engines in readiness? --- Dry up thy sorrowful eyes. Let unconcern and heart's-ease once more take possession of thy solemn features. Thou hast hitherto performed extremely well. Shame not thy past, by thy future behaviour; and a rich reward awaits thee. If thou *art* dough, *be* dough; and I flapt him on the shoulder --- Resume but thy former shape --- And I'll be answerable for the event.

He bow'd assent and compliance: Went to the glass; and began to untwist and unsadden his features: Pull'd his wig right, as if that, as well as his head and heart, had been discomposed by his compunction; and once more became old Mulciber's and mine.

But didst thou think, Jack, that there was so much --- What-shall-I-call it? --- in this Tomlinson? Didst thou imagine, that such a fellow as that, had bowels? That nature, so long dead and buried in him, as to all humane effects, should thus revive and exert itself? --- Yet why do I ask this question of thee, who, to my equal surprize, haft shewn, on the same occasion, the like compassionate sensibilities?

As to Tomlinson, it looks as if poverty had made him the wicked fellow he is; as plenty and wantonness have made us what we are. Necessity, after all, is the test of principle. But what is there in this dull word, or thing, called HONESTY, that even I, who cannot in my present views be served by it, can not

not help thinking even the accidental emanations of it amiable in Tomlinson, tho' demonstrated in a *female case*; and judging better of him for being capable of such?

LETTER XIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

THIS debate between the Captain and me, was hardly over, when the three women, led by Miss Rawlins, enter'd, hoping, No intrusion---But very desirous, the maiden said, to know if we were likely to accommodate.

O yes, I hope so. You know, ladies, that your Sex must, in these cases, preserve their forms. They must be courted to comply with their own happiness. A lucky expedient, we have hit upon. The uncle has his doubts of our marriage. He cannot believe, nor will any-body, that it is possible that a man so much in love, the lady so desirable ----

They all took the hint---It was a very extraordinary case, the two widows allowed. Women, Jack, as I believe I have observed elsewhere, have a high opinion of what they can do for us---Miss Rawlins desired, if I pleased, to let them know the expedient; and look'd as if there was no need to proceed in the rest of my speech.

I begg'd, that they would not let the lady know that I had told them what this expedient was.

They promised.

It was this: That to oblige and satisfy Mr. Harlowe, the ceremony was to be again performed. He was to be privately present, and to give his niece to me with his own hands---And she was retired to consider of it.

Thou seest, Jack, that I have provided an excuse, to save my veracity to the women here, in case I

should incline to marriage, and she should choose to have Miss Rawlins's assistance at the ceremony. Nor doubted I to bring my Fair-one to save my credit on this occasion, if I could get her to consent to be mine.

A charming expedient! cried the widow. They were all three ready to clap their hands for joy upon it. Women love to be married twice at least, Jack; tho' not indeed to the *same man*; and all bless'd the reconciliatory scheme, and the proposer of it; and, supposing it came from the Captain, they look'd at him with pleasure, while his face shined with the applause implied. He should think himself very happy, if he could bring about a general reconciliation; and he flourish'd with his head like my man Will, on his victory over old Grimes; bridling by turns, like Miss Rawlins in the height of a prudish fit.

But now it was time for the Captain to think of returning to town, having a great deal of business to dispatch before morning: Nor was he certain that he should again be able to attend us at Hampstead before he went home.

And yet I did not intend that he should leave Hampstead this night: Every thing drawing on to a crisis.

A message to the above effect was carried up, at my desire, by Mrs. Moore; with the Captain's compliments, and to know if she had any commands for him to her uncle?

But I hinted to the women, that it would be proper for them to withdraw, if the lady did come down; lest she should not care to be so free before *them*, on a proposal so particular, as she would be to *us*, who had offer'd it to her consideration.

Mrs. Moore brought down word, that the lady was following her. They all three withdrew; and she enter'd at one door, as they went out at the other.

The

The Captain accosted her, repeating the contents of the message sent up ; and desired, that she would give him her commands in relation to the report he was to make to her uncle Harlowe.

I know not what to say, Sir, nor what I would have *you* to say, to my uncle. Perhaps you may have business in town---Perhaps you need not see my uncle, till I have heard from Miss Howe ; till after Lady Betty---I don't know what to say.

I implored the return of that value, which she had so generously acknowledg'd once to have had for me. I presumed, I said, to flatter myself that Lady Betty, in her own person, and in the name of all my family, would be able, on my promised reformation and contrition, to prevail in my favour ; especially as our prospects in other respects, with regard to the general reconciliation wished for, were so happy. But let me owe to your own generosity, my dearest creature, said I, rather than to the mediation of any person on earth, the forgiveness I am an humble suitor for. How much more agreeable to yourself, O best beloved of my soul, must it be, as well as obliging to me, that your first personal knowlege of my relations, and theirs of you (for they will not be denied attending you), should not be begun in recriminations and appeals ! As Lady Betty will be here so soon, it will not perhaps be possible for you to receive her visit with a brow absolutely serene. But, dearest, dearest creature, I beseech you, let the misunderstanding pass as a flight one---As a misunderstanding clear'd up. Appeals give pride and superiority to the persons appealed to, and are apt to lessen the appellant, not only in their eye, but in her own. Exalt not into judges those who are prepared to take lessons and instructions from you. The individuals of my family are as proud as I am said to be. But they will chearfully resign to your superiority---You

will be the first woman of the family in every one's eyes.

This might have done with any other woman in the world but *this*; and yet she is the only woman in the world of whom it may with truth be said---But thus, angrily, did she disclaim the compliment.

Yes, indeed! --- (and there she stopt a moment, her sweet bosom heaving with a noble disdain) --- Trick'd out of myself, from the very first---A fugitive from my own family! Renounced by my relations! Insulted by you! --- Laying humble claim to the protection of yours! --- Is not this the light in which I must appear not only to the ladies of your family, but to all the world? --- Think you, Sir, that in these circumstances, or even had I been in the *happiest*, that I could be affected by this plea of undeserved superiority? --- You are a stranger to the mind of Clarissa Harlowe, if you think her capable of so poor and so *undue* a pride!

She went from us to the farther end of the room.

The Captain was again affected---Excellent creature! I called her; and, reverently approaching her, urged further the plea I had last made.

It is but lately, said I, that the opinions of my relations have been more than indifferent to me, whether good or bad; and it is for *your* sake, more than for *my own*, that I now wish to stand well with my whole family. The principal motive of Lady Betty's coming up, is, to purchase presents for the whole family to make on the happy occasion.

This consideration, turning to the Captain, with so noble-minded a dear creature, I know, can have no weight; only as it will shew their value and respect. But what a damp would their worthy hearts receive, were they to find their admired new niece, as they now think her, not only *not* their niece, but capable of renouncing me for ever! They love me.

They *all* love me. I have been guilty of carelessness and levity to them, indeed; but of carelessness and levity only; and *that* owing to a pride that has set me above meanness, tho' it has not done every thing for me.

My whole family will be guaranties for my good behaviour to this dear creature, their niece, their daughter, their cousin, their friend, their chosen companion and directress, all in one.---Upon my soul, Captain, we *may*, we *must* be happy.

But, dearest, dearest creature, let me on my knees (and down I dropt, her face all the time turn'd half from me, as she stood at the window, her handkerchief often at her eyes) plead your *promised* forgiveness; and let us not appear to them, on their visit, thus unhappy with each other. Lady Betty, the next hour that she sees you, will write her opinion of you, and of the likelihood of our future happiness, to Lady Sarah, her sister, a weak-spirited woman, who now hopes to supply to herself, in my bride, the lost daughter she still mourns for!

The Captain then joined in, re-urging her uncle's hopes and expectations; and his resolution effectually to set about the general reconciliation: The mischief that might be prevented: The certainty he was in, that her uncle might be prevailed upon to give her to me with his own hand, if she made it her choice to wait for his coming up. But, for his own part, he humbly advised, and fervently pressed her, to make the very next day, or Monday at farthest, my happy day.

Permit me, dearest Lady, said he, and I could kneel to you myself (bending his knee); tho' I have no interest in my earnestness, but the pleasure I should have to be able to serve you all; to beseech you to give me an opportunity to assure your uncle, that I myself saw with my own eyes the happy knot ty'd!—All misunderstandings, all doubts, all difficulties, will then be at an end.

And what, Madam, rejoined I, still kneeling, can there be in your new measures, be they what they will, that can so happily, so reputably, I will presume to say, for all round, obviate the present difficulties?

Miss Howe herself, if she loves you, and loves your fame, Madam, urged the Captain, his knee still bent, must congratulate you on such a happy conclusion.

Then turning her face, she saw the Captain half-kneeling—O Sir! O Capt. Tomlinson!—Why this *undue condescension*? extending her hand to his elbow, to raise him.—I cannot bear this!—Then casting her eye to me, Rise, Mr. Lovelace. Kneel not to the poor creature whom you have insulted!—How cruel the occasion for it!—And how mean the submission!

Not mean to such an angel!—Nor can I rise, but to be forgiven!—

The Captain then re-urged once more the day—He was amazed, he said, if she ever valued me—

O Captain Tomlinson, interrupted she, how much are you the friend of this man!—If I had never valued him, he never would have had it in his power to insult me; nor could I have taken to heart as I do, the insult (execrable as it was) so undeservedly, so ungratefully given—But let him retire—For a moment let him retire.

I was more than half afraid to trust the Captain by himself with her—He gave me a sign that I might depend upon him—And then I took out of my pocket his letter to me, and Lady Betty's, and Miss Montague's, and Lord M.'s (which last she had not then seen), and giving them to him: Procure for me, in the first place, Mr. Tomlinson, a re-perusal of these three letters; and of *This*, from Lord M. And I beseech you, my dearest life, give them due

con-

consideration : And let me on my return find the happy effects of it.

I then withdrew ; with slow feet, however, and a misgiving heart.

The Captain insisted upon this re-perusal previously to what she had to say to him, as he tells me. She comply'd, but with some difficulty ; as if she was afraid of being *soften'd in my favour* !

She lamented her unhappy situation ; destitute of friends, and not knowing whither to go, or what to do.—She asked questions, *sifting* questions, about her uncle, about her family, and after what he knew of Mr. Hickman's fruitless application in her favour.

He was well prepared in this particular ; for I had shewn him the letters, and extracts of letters, of Miss Howe, which I had so happily come at (a). Might she be assured, she asked him, that her brother, with Singleton, and Solmes, were actually in quest of her ?

He averr'd that they were.

She asked, If he thought I had hopes of prevailing on her to go back to town ?

He was sure I had not.

Was he really of opinion, that Lady Betty would pay her a visit ?

He had no doubt of it.

But, Sir ; but, Captain Tomlinson—Then impatiently turning from him, and again to him, I know not what to do—But were I *your* daughter, Sir—Were *you* my own father—Alas, Sir, I have neither father nor mother !

He turned from her, and wiped his eyes.

O Sir ! you have humanity ! [She wept too] There are some men in the world, thank Heaven, that *can* be moved. O Sir, I have met with hard-hearted men ; and in my own family too—or I could not

(a) Vol. iv. p. 126, & seq.

have been so unhappy as I am—But I make every body unhappy !

I suppose his eyes run over.

Dearest Madam ! Heavenly Lady !—Who can—who can—hesitated and blubber'd the dog, as he owned. And indeed I heard some part of what passed, tho' *they both* talked lower than I wished; for, from the nature of *their* conversation, there was no room for altitudes.

THEM, and BOTH, and THEY !—How it goes against me to include this angel of a creature, and any man on earth, but myself, in *one* word !

Capt. Who can forbear being affected ?—But, Madam, you *can* be no other man's.

Cl. Nor would I be. But he is so funk with me !—To fire the house !—An artifice so vile !—contrived for the worst of purposes !—Would you have a daughter of yours—But what would I say ?—Yet you see, that I have nobody in whom I can confide !—Mr. Lovelace is a vindictive man !—He could not love the creature whom he could insult as he has insulted me ! Then pausing—In short, I never, never can forgive him, nor he *me*.—Do you think, Sir, I would have gone so far, as I have gone, if I had intended ever to draw with him in one yoke ?—I left behind me *such* a letter—

You know, Madam, he has acknowleged the justice of your resentment—

O Sir, he can acknowlege, and he can retract, fifty times a day—But do not think I am trifling with myself and you, and want to be *persuaded* to forgive him, and to be *his*.—There is not a creature of my sex, who would have been *more explicit*, and *more frank*, than I would have been, from the moment I intended to be *his*, had I had a heart like *my own* to deal with. I was always *above reserve*, Sir, I will presume to say, where I had no cause of doubt. Mr. Lovelace's conduct has made me appear, perhaps,

over-

over-nice, when my heart wanted to be encouraged and assured ; and when, if it had been so, my whole behaviour would have been governed by it.

She stopt, her handkerchief at her eyes. I inquired after the minutest part of her behaviour, as well as after her words. I love, thou knowest, to trace human nature, and more particularly female nature, thro' its most secret recesses.

The pitiful fellow was lost in silent admiration of her—And thus the noble creature proceeded.

It is the fate of unequal unions, that tolerable creatures, thro' them, frequently incur censure, when, more happily yoked, they might be intitled to praise. And shall I not shun an union with a man, that might lead into errors a creature who flatters herself that she is blest with an inclination to be good ; and who wishes to make every-one happy with whom she has any connexion, even to her very servants ?

She paused, taking a turn about the room—the fellow, devil fetch him, a mummy all the time : Then proceeded.

Formerly, indeed, I hoped to be an humble means of reforming him. But, when I have *no such hope*, is it right (You are a serious man, Sir) to make a venture that shall endanger *my own morals* !

Still silent was the varlet. If my advocate had nothing to say for me, what hope of carrying my cause ?

And now, Sir, what is the result of all ?—It is this—That you will endeavour, if you have that influence over him which a man of your sense and experience ought to have, to prevail upon him, and that for *his own sake*, as well as *mine*, to leave me free to pursue my own destiny. And of this you may assure him, that I never will be any other man's.

Impossible, Madam !—I know that Mr. Lovelace would not hear me with patience on such a topic. And I do assure you, that I have some spirit, and

should not care to take an indignity from him, or from any man living.

She paused—Then resuming—And think you, Sir, that my uncle will refuse to receive a letter from me?—*How averse, Jack, to concede a tittle in my favour!*

I know, Madam, as matters are circumstanced, that he would not *answer* it. If you please I will carry one down from you.

And will he not pursue his intentions in *my* favour, nor be himself reconciled to me, except I am married?

From what your brother gives out, and affects to believe, on Mr. Lovelace's living with you in the same—

No more, Sir—I am an unhappy creature!

He then re-urged, that it would be in her power instantly, or on the morrow, to put an end to all her difficulties.

How can that be, said she? The licence *still* to be obtained? The settlements *still* to be signed? Miss Howe's answer to my last *unreceived*?—And shall I, Sir, be in such a HURRY, as if I thought my honour *in danger if I delay'd*? Yet marry the man from whom only it *can* be endanger'd?—Unhappy, thrice unhappy, Clarissa Harlowe!—In how many difficulties has one rash step involved thee?—And she turn'd from him, and wept.

The varlet, by way of comfort, wept too: Yet her tears, as he might have observed, were tears that indicated rather a *yielding* than a *perverse* temper.

There is a sort of stone, thou knowest, so soft in the quarry, that it may, in a manner, be cut with a knife; but if the opportunity be not taken, and it is exposed to the air for any time, it will become as hard as marble, and then with difficulty it yields to the chisel (a). So this lady, not taken at the mo-

(a) *The nature of the Bath stone, in particular.*

ment, after a turn or two cross the room, gained more resolution; and then she declared, as she had done once before, that she would wait the issue of Miss Howe's answer to the letter she had sent her from hence, and take her measures accordingly; leaving it to him, mean time, to make what report he thought fit, to her uncle; the kindest that *truth* could bear, she doubted not from Captain Tomlinson: And she should be glad of a few lines from him, to hear what *that* was.

She wished him a good journey. She complained of her head; and was about to withdraw: But I stept round to the door next the stairs, as if I had but just come in from the garden; which, as I entered, I called a very pretty one; and took her reluctant hand, as she was going out: My dearest life, you are not going?—What hopes, Captain?—Have you not some hopes to give me of pardon and reconciliation?

She said, She would not be detained. But I would not let her go, till she had promised to return, when the Captain had reported to me what her resolution was.

And when he had, I claimed her promise; and she came down again, and repeated it, as what she was determined upon.

I expostulated with her upon it, in the most submissive and earnest manner. She made it necessary for me to repeat many of the pleas I had before urged. The Captain seconded me with equal earnestness. At last, each fell down on his knees before her.

She was distressed. I was afraid at one time she would have fainted. Yet neither of us would rise without some concessions. I pleaded my own sake; the Captain, his dear friend her uncle's; and both, the prevention of future mischief; and the peace and happiness of the two families.

She own'd herself unequal to the conflict. She sigh'd, she sobb'd, she wept, she wrung her hands.

I was perfectly eloquent in my vows and protestations. Her tearful eyes were cast down upon me; a glow upon each charming cheek; a visible anguish in every lovely feature—At last, her trembling knees seeming to fail her, she dropt into the next chair; her charming face, as if seeking for a hiding-place (which a mother's bosom would have best supply'd), sinking upon her own shoulder.

I forgot at the instant all my vows of revenge. I threw myself at her feet as she sat; and, snatching her hand, pressed it with my lips. I besought Heaven to forgive my past offences, and prosper my future hopes, as I designed honourably and justly by the charmer of my heart, if once more she would restore me to her favour. And I thought I felt drops of scalding water (Could they be tears?) trickle down upon my cheeks; while my cheeks, glowing like fire, seemed to scorch up the unwelcome strangers.

I then arose, not doubting of an imply'd pardon in this silent distress. I raised the Captain. I whisper'd him—By my soul, man, I am in earnest.—Now talk of reconciliation, of her uncle, of the licence, of settlements—And raising my voice, If now at last, Captain Tomlinson, my angel will give me leave to call so great a blessing mine, it will be impossible that you should say too much to her uncle in praise of my gratitude, my affection, and fidelity to his charming niece; and he may begin as soon as he pleases, his kind schemes for effecting the desirable reconciliation!—Nor shall he prescribe any terms to me, that I will not comply with.

The Captain bless'd me with his eyes and hands—Thank God, whisper'd he. We approached the lady together.

What hinders, dearest Madam, said he, what now hinders, but that Lady Betty Lawrance, when she comes, may be acquainted with the truth of everything? And assist privately at your nuptials?—I will stay

stay till they are celebrated ; and then shall I go down with the happy tidings to my dear Mr. Harlowe.—And all will, all must, soon be happy.

I must have an answer from Miss Howe, reply'd the still trembling Fair-one. I cannot change my new measures, but with her advice. I will forfeit all my hopes of happiness in this world, rather than her good opinion, and that she should think me giddy, unsteady, or precipitate. All I will further say on the present subject is this, That, when I have her answer to what I *have* written, I will write to her the whole state of the matter, as I shall then be enabled to do.

Lovel. Then must I despair for ever—O Captain Tomlinson, Miss Howe hates me!—Miss Howe—

Capt. Not so, perhaps—When Miss Howe knows your concern for having offended, she will never advise, that, with such prospects of general reconciliation, the hopes of so many considerable persons in both families, should be frustrated. Some little time, as that excellent lady has foreseen and hinted, will necessarily be taken up, in actually procuring the licence, and in perusing and signing the settlements. In that time Miss Howe's answer may be received ; and Lady Betty may arrive ; and she, no doubt, will have weight to dissipate the lady's doubts, and to accelerate the day. It shall be my part, mean time, to make Mr. Harlowe easy. All I fear from delay is, from Mr. James Harlowe's quarter ; and therefore all must be conducted with prudence and privacy ;—As your uncle, Madam, has proposed.

She was silent : I rejoiced in her silence : The dear creature, thought I, has actually forgiven me in her heart !—But why will she not lay me under obligation to her, by the generosity of an explicit declaration ?—And yet, as that would not accelerate any-thing, while the licence is not in my hands, she is the less to be blamed (if I do her justice), that she took more time to *descend*. I pro-

I proposed, as on the morrow night, to go to town; and doubted not to bring the licence up with me on Monday morning. Would she be pleased to assure me, that she would not depart from Mrs. Moore's?

She should stay at Mrs. Moore's, till she had an answer from Miss Howe.

I told her, that I hop'd I might have her *tacit* consent, at least, to the obtaining of the licence.

I saw by the turn of her countenance, that I should not have asked this question. She was so far from *tacitly* consenting, that she declared to the contrary.

As I never intended, I said, to ask her to enter again into a house, with the people of which she was so much offended, would she be pleased to give orders for her cloaths to be brought up hither? Or should Dorcas attend her for any of her commands on that head?

She desired not ever more to see any-body belonging to that house. She might perhaps get Mrs. Moore or Mrs. Bevis to go thither for her, and take her keys with them.

I doubted not, I said, that Lady Betty would arrive by that time. I hoped she had no objection to my bringing that lady and my cousin Montague up with me?

She was silent.

To be sure, Mr. Lovelace, said the Captain, the lady can have no objection to this.

She was still silent. So silence in this case was assent.

Would she be pleased to write to Miss Howe?—

Sir! Sir! peevishly interrupting—No more questions: No prescribing to me.—You will do as you think fit. So will I, as I please. I own no obligation to you. Captain Tomlinson, your servant. Recommend me to my uncle Harlowe's favour: And was going.

I took

I took her reluctant hand, and besought her only to promise to meet me early in the morning.

To what purpose meet you? Have you more to say, than has been said?—I have had enough of vows and protestations, Mr. Lovelace. To what purpose should I meet you to-morrow morning?

I repeated my request, and that in the most fervent manner, naming six in the morning.

" You know, that I am always stirring before " that hour, at this season of the year," was the half-expressed consent.

She then again recommended herself to her uncle's favour; and withdrew.

And thus, Belford, has she *mended her markets*, as Lord M. would say, and I worshipped mine. Miss Howe's next letter is now the hinge, on which the fate of both must turn. I shall be absolutely ruin'd and undone, if I cannot intercept it.

LETTER XV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Sat. Midnight.

*N*O rest, says a text that I once heard preached upon, *to the wicked*—And I cannot close my eyes; yet wanted only to compound for half an hour in an elbow-chair. So must scribble on.

I parted with the Captain, after another strong debate with him in relation to what is to be the fate of this lady. As the fellow has an excellent head, and would have made an eminent figure in any station of life, had not his early days been tainted with a deep crime, and he detected in it; and as he had the right side of the argument; I had a good deal of difficulty with him; and at last brought myself to promise, that if I could prevail upon her generously to forgive me, and to reinstate me in her favour, I would make it my whole endeavour to get off of my

con-

contrivances, as happily as I could (only that Lady Betty and Charlotte must come); and then, substituting him for her uncle's proxy, take shame to myself, and marry.

But if I should, Jack (with the strongest antipathy to the state that ever man had), what a figure shall I make in rakish annals? And can I have taken all this pains for nothing? Or for a wife only, that, however excellent (and *any* woman, do I think, I could make good, because I could make any woman *fear* as well as *love* me), might have been obtained without the plague I have been at, and much more reputably than with it? And hast thou not seen, that this haughty lady knows not how to forgive with graciousness? Indeed has not at all forgiven me? But holds my soul in a *suspense*, which has been so grievous to her own,

At this silent moment I think, that if I were to pursue my former scheme, and resolve to try whether I cannot make a greater fault serve as a sponge to wipe out a less; and then be forgiven for that; I can justify myself to *myself*; and that, as the fair Implacable would say, is all in all.

It is my intention, in all my reflections, to avoid repeating, at least dwelling upon, what I have before written to thee, tho' the state of the case may not have varied; so I would have thee reconsider the *old* reasonings (particularly those contained in my answer to thy last expostulatory nonsense (*a*)); and add the *new*, as they fall from my pen; and then I shall think myself invincible;—at least, as arguing rake to rake.

I take the gaining of this lady to be essential to my happiness: And is it not natural for *all men* to aim at obtaining whatever they think will make them happy, be the object more or less considerable in the eyes of others?

As to the manner of endeavouring to obtain her,
by

(*a*) See Vol. iv. p. 277. & seq.

by falsification of oaths, vows, and the like—Do not the poets of two thousand years and upwards tell us, that Jupiter laughs at the perjuries of lovers? And let me add, to what I have heretofore mentioned on that head, a question or two.

Do not the mothers, the aunts, the grandmothers, the governesses of the pretty innocents, always, from their very cradles to riper years, preach to them the deceitfulness of men?—That they are not to regard their oaths, vows, promises?—What a parcel of fibbers would all these reverend matrons be, if there were not now-and-then a pretty credulous rogue taken in for a justification of their preachments, and to serve as a beacon lighted up for the benefit of the rest?

Do we not then see, that an honest prowling fellow is a necessary evil on many accounts? Do we not see, that it is highly requisite that a sweet girl should be now-and-then drawn aside by him?—And the more eminent the lady, in the graces of person, mind, and fortune, is not the example likely to be the more efficacious?

If these *postulata* be granted me, who, I pray, can equal my charmer in all these? Who therefore so fit for an example to the rest of the Sex?—At worst, I am intirely within my worthy friend Mandeville's rule, *That private vices are public benefits.*

Well then, if this sweet creature must fall, as it is called, for the benefit of 'all the pretty fools of the Sex, she *must*; and there's an end of the matter. And what would there have been in it of uncommon or rare, had I not been so long about it?—And so I dismiss all further argumentation and debate upon the question: And I impose upon thee, when thou writest to me, an eternal silence on this head.

Wafer'd on, as an after-written introduction to the paragraphs which follow.

LORD, Jack, what shall I do now!—How one evil brings on another!—Dreadful news to tell thee!—While I was meditating a simple robbery, here have I (in my own defence indeed) been guilty of murder! A bloody murder!—So I believe it will prove.—At her last gasp!—Poor impudent opposer! Eternally resisting!—Eternally contradicting! There she lies, weltering in her blood! Her death's wound have I given her!—But she was a thief, an impostor, as well as a tormentor. She had stolen my pen.—While I was sullenly meditating, doubting, as to my future measures, she stole it; and thus she wrote with it, in a hand exactly like my own; and would have faced me down, that it was really my own hand-writing.

“ But let me reflect, before it be too late. On the manifold perfections of this ever-admirable creature, let me reflect. The hand yet is only held up. The blow is not struck. Miss Howe's next letter may blow thee up. In policy thou shouldest be now at least honest. Thou canst not live without her. Thou wouldest rather marry her than lose her absolutely. Thou mayest undoubtably prevail upon her, inflexible as she seems to be, for marriage. But if now she find thee a villain, thou mayest never more engage her attention, and she, perhaps, will refuse and abhor thee.

“ Yet already have I not gone too far? Like a repentant thief, afraid of his gang, and obliged to go on, in fear of hanging till he comes to be hang'd, I am afraid of the gang of my cursed con-trivances.

“ As I hope to live, I am sorry, at the present writing, that I have been such a foolish plotter, as to put it, as I fear I have done, out of my own

“ power

" power to be honest. I hate compulsion in all forms ;
" and cannot bear, even to be compelled to be the
" wretch my choice has made me !—So now, Belford,
" as thou hast said, I am a machine at last, and no
" free agent.

" Upon my soul, Jack, it is a very foolish thing
" for a man of spirit to have brought himself to such
" a height of iniquity, that he must proceed, and
" cannot help himself ; and yet to be next-to cer-
" tain, that his very victory will undo him.

" Why was such a woman as This thrown in my
" way, whose very fall will be her glory, and, per-
" haps, not only my shame, but my destruction ?

" What a happiness must that man know, who
" moves regularly to some laudable end, and has
" nothing to reproach himself with in his progress to
" it ! When, by honest means, he attains this end,
" how great and unmixed must be his enjoyments !
" What a happy man, in this particular case, had I
" been, had it been given me to be only what I
" wished to appear to be !"

Thus far had my *Conscience* written with my pens,
and see what a recreant she had made me !—I seized
her by the throat—*There !—There*, said I, thou vile
impertinent !—Take that, and that !—How often have
I given thee warning !—And now, I hope, thou intruding varletes, have I done thy business !

Puling, and *in-voiced*, rearing up thy detested
head, in vain implorest thou *my* mercy, who, in *thy*
day, hast shewed me so little !—Take that, for a
rising-blow !—And now will *thy* pain, and *my* pain
from *thee*, soon be over !—Lie there !—Welter on !—
Had I not given thee thy death's wound, thou would-
est have robbed me of all my joys. Thou couldest
not have mended me, 'tis plain. Thou couldest
only have thrown me into despair. Didst thou not
see, that I had gone too far to recede ?—Welter on,
once more I bid thee !—Gasp on !—*That* thy last
gasp,

gasp, surely!—How hard diest thou!—ADIEU!—
 'Tis kind in thee, however, to bid me *Adieu!*—
 Adieu, Adieu, Adieu, to thee, O thou inflexible,
 and, till now, unconquerable bosom-intruder—
 Adieu to thee for ever!

LETTER XVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sunday Morn. (June 11.) 4 o'Clock.

AFew words to the information thou sentest me last night concerning thy poor old' man; and then I rise from my seat, shake myself, refresh, new-dress, and so to my charmer, whom, notwithstanding her reserves, I hope to prevail upon to walk out with me on the heath, this warm and fine morning.

The birds must have awaken'd her before now. They are in full song. She always gloried in accustoming herself to behold the sun-rise; one of God's natural wonders, as once she called it.

Her window salutes the East. The valleys must be gilded by his rays, by the time I am with her; for already have they made the up-lands smile, and the face of nature cheerful.

How unsuitable wilt thou find this gay preface to a subject so gloomy, as that I am now turning to!

I am glad to hear thy tedious expectations are at last answered.

Thy servant tells me, that thou art plaguily grieved at the old fellow's departure.

I can't say, but thou mayst look as if thou wert harassed as thou hast been for a number of days and nights with a close attendance upon a dying man, beholding his drawing-on hour—Pretending, for decency's sake, to whine over his excruciating pangs—To be in the way to answer a thousand impertinent inquiries after the health of a man thou wishedst to die—To pray by him—for so once thou wrotest to me!—

To

To read by him—To be forced to join in consultations with a parcel of solemn wou'd-seem-wise doctors, and their officious Zanies the apothecaries, joined with the butcherly tribe of scarificators; all combined to carry on the physical farce, and to cut out thongs both from his flesh and his estate—To have the super-added apprehension of dividing thy interest in what he shall leave with a crew of eager-hoping, never-to-be-satisfied relations, legatees, and the devil knows who, of private gratifiers of passions laudable and illaudable—In these circumstances, I wonder not that thou lookest to servants (as little grieved at heart as thyself, and who are gaping after legacies, as thou after *heirship*) as if thou indeed wert grieved; and as if the most wry-facing woe had befallen thee.

Then, as I have often thought, the reflection that must naturally arise from such mortifying objects, as the death of one with whom we have been familiar, must afford, when we are obliged to attend it in its slow approaches, and in its face-twisting pangs, that it will one day be our own case, goes a great way to credit the appearance of grief.

And This it is that, seriously reflected upon, may temporarily give a fine air of sincerity to the wailings of lively widows, heart-exulting heirs, and residuary legatees of all denominations; since, by keeping down the inward joy, those interesting reflections must sadden the aspect, and add an appearance of real concern to the assumed sables.

Well, but, now thou art come to the reward of all thy watchings, anxieties, and close attendances, tell me what it is; tell me if it compensate thy trouble, and answer thy hope?

As to myself, thou seest, by the gravity of my style, how the subject has help'd to mortify me. But the necessity I am under of committing either speedy matrimony, or a rape, has sadden'd over my gayer prospects, and, more than the case itself, contributed

tributed to make me sympathize with thy present joyful-sorrow.

Adieu, Jack. I must be soon out of my pain; and my Clarissa shall be soon out of hers—For so does the arduousness of the case require.

LETTER XVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Sunday Morning.

I Have had the honour of my charmer's company for two complete hours. We met before six in Mrs. Moore's garden: A walk on the heath refused me.

The sedateness of her aspect, and her kind compliance in this meeting, gave me hopes. And all that either the Captain or I had urged yesterday to obtain a full and free pardon, that re-urged I; and I told her, besides, that Capt. Tomlinson was gone down with hopes to prevail upon her uncle Harlowe to come up in person, in order to present me with the greatest blessing that man ever received.

But the utmost I could obtain was, That she would take no resolution in my favour, till she received Miss Howe's next letter.

I will not repeat the arguments used by me: But I will give thee the substance of what she said in answer to them.

She had considered of every thing, she told me. My whole conduct was before her. The house I carried her to, must be a vile house. The people early shewed what they were capable of, in the earnest attempt made to fasten Miss Partington upon her; as she doubted not, with my approbation.—[Surely, thought I, she has not received a duplicate of Miss Howe's letter of detection!] They heard her cries. My insult was undoubtedly premeditated. By my whole recollect'd behaviour to her, previous to

it, it must be so. I had the vilest of views, no question. And my treatment of her put it out of all doubt.

Soul all over, Belford ! she seems sensible of liberties, that my passion made me insensible of having taken.

She besought me to give over all thoughts of her. Sometimes, she said, she thought herself cruelly treated by her nearest and dearest relations : At such times, a spirit of repining, and even of resentment, took place, and the reconciliation, at other times so desirable, was not then so much the favourite wish of her heart, as was the scheme she had formerly planned—of taking her good Norton for her directress and guide, and living upon her own estate in the manner her grandfather had intended she should live.

This scheme, she doubted not, that her cousin Morden, who was one of her trustees for that estate, would enable her (and that as she hoped, without litigation) to pursue. And if he can, and does, what, Sir, let me ask you, said she, have I seen in your conduct, that should make me prefer to it an union of interests, where there is such a disunion in minds ?

So thou seest, Jack, there is *reason*, as well as *resentment*, in the preference she makes against me !—Thou seest, that she presumes to think, that she can be happy *without* me ; and that she must be unhappy *with* me !

I had besought her, in the conclusion of my re-urged arguments, to write to Miss Howe before Miss Howe's answer could come, in order to lay before her the present state of things ; and if she would defer to her judgment, to let her have an opportunity to give it, on the full knowlege of the case —

So I would, Mr. Lovelace, was the answer, if I were in doubt myself, which I would prefer ; marriage, or the scheme I have mentioned. You cannot think, Sir, but the latter must be my choice. I wish

to

to part with you with temper—Don't put me upon repeating—

Part with me, Madam, interrupted I!—I cannot bear those words!—But let me beseech you, however, to write to Miss Howe. I hope, if Miss Howe is not my enemy—

She is not the enemy of your person, Sir;—as you would be convinced, if you saw her last letter to me (a). But were she not an enemy to your actions, she would not be my friend, nor the friend of virtue. Why will you provoke from me, Mr. Lovelace, the harshness of expression, which, however deserved by you, I am unwilling just now to use; having suffered enough in the two past days from my own vehemence?

I bit my lip for vexation. I was silent.

Miss Howe, proceeded she, knows the full state of matters already, Sir. The answer I expect from her respects *myself*, not *you*. Her heart is too warm in the cause of friendship, to leave me in suspense one moment longer than is necessary, as to what I want to know. Nor does her answer depend absolutely upon herself. She must see a person first; and that person perhaps must see others.

The cursed smuggler-woman, Jack!—Miss Howe's Townsend, I doubt not!—Plot, contrivance, intrigue, stratagem!—Underground moles these ladies—But let the earth cover me! let me be a mole too, thought I, if they carry their point!—And if this lady escape me now.

She frankly owned, that she had once thought of embarking *out of all our ways* for some one of our American colonies. But now that she had been compelled to see me (which had been her greatest dread, and which she would have given her life to avoid), she thought she might be happiest in the resumption of

(a) *The lady innocently means, Mr. Lovelace's forged one, p. 94. of this Volume.*

of her former favourite scheme, if Miss Howe could find her a reputable and private asylum, till her cousin Morden could come. But if he came not soon, and if she had a difficulty to get to a place of refuge, whether from her brother or from *any-body else* (meaning me, I suppose), she might yet perhaps go abroad: For, to say the truth, she could not think of returning to her father's house; since her brother's rage, her sister's upbraiding, her father's anger, her mother's still more-affecting sorrowings, and her own consciousness under them all, would be insupportable to her.

O Jack! I am sick to death, I pine, I die, for Miss Howe's next letter! I would bind, gag, strip, rob, and do any thing but murder, to intercept it.

But, determined as she seems to be, it was evident to me, nevertheless, that she had still some tenderness for me.

She often wept as she talk'd, and much oftener sigh'd. She looked at me twice with an eye of *undoubted* gentleness, and three times with an eye *tending* to compassion and softness: But its benign rays were as often *snatch'd* back, as I may say, and her face averted, as if her sweet eye were not to be trusted, and could not stand against my eager eyes; seeking, as they did, for a lost heart in hers, and endeavouring to penetrate to her very soul.

More than once I took her hand. She struggled not *much* against the freedom. I pressed it once with my lips. She was not *very* angry. A frown indeed; but a frown that had more distress in it than indignation.

How came the dear soul (cloathed as it is with such a filken vesture) by all its steadiness (*a*)?—Was it necessary, that the active gloom of such a tyrant of a *father*, should commix with such a passive sweet-

(a) See Vol. i. p. 50, 51, 86, 126, 127. for what she herself says on that steadiness which Mr. Lovelace, tho' a deserved sufferer by it, cannot help admiring.

ness of a will-less *mother*, to produce a constancy, an equanimity, a steadiness, in the *daughter*, which never woman before could boast of?—If so, she is more obliged to that despotic father than I could have imagined a creature to be, who gave distinction to every one related to her, beyond what the crown itself can confer.

I hoped, I said, that she would admit of the intended visit of the two ladies, which I had so often mentioned.

She was *here*. She *had* seen me. She could not help herself at present. She ever had the highest regard for the ladies of my family, because of their worthy characters. There she turned away her sweet face, and vanquished a half-risen sigh.

I kneeled to her then. It was upon a verdant cushion; for we were upon the grass-walk. I caught her hand. I besought her with an earnestness that called up, as I could feel, my heart to my eyes, to make me, by her forgiveness and example, more worthy of them, and of her own kind and generous wishes. By my soul, Madam, said I, you stab me with your goodness, your undeserved goodness! and I cannot bear it!

Why, why, thought I, as I did several times in this conversation, will she not *generously* forgive me? Why will she make it necessary for me to bring my aunt and my cousin to my assistance? Can the fortresses expect the same advantageous capitulation, which yields not to the summons of a resistless conqueror, as if it gave not the trouble of bringing up, and raising its heavy artillery against it?

What *sensibilities*, said the divine creature, withdrawing her hand, must thou have suppressed!—What a dreadful, what a judicial hardness of heart must thine be; who canst be capable of such emotions as sometimes thou hast shewn; and of such sentiments, as sometimes have flowed from thy lips; yet

yet canst have so far overcome them all, as to be able to act as thou hast acted, and that, from settled purpose and premeditation ; and this, as it is *said*, throughout the whole of thy life, from infancy to this time !

I told her, that I had hoped, from the generous concern she had expressed for me, when I was so suddenly and dangerously taken ill—[The Ipecacuanha experiment, Jack !].

She interrupted me.—Well have you rewarded me for the concern you speak of ! — However, I will frankly own, now that I am determined to think no more of you, that you might (unsatisfied as I nevertheless was with you) have made an interest—

She paused. I besought her to proceed.

Do you suppose, Sir, and turned away her sweet face as we walked ; do you suppose, that I had not thought of laying down a plan to govern myself by, when I found myself so unhappily over-reached, and cheated, as I may say, out of myself ? — When I found, that I could not *be*, and *do*, what I wished *to be*, and *to do*, do you imagine, that I had not cast about, what was the next proper course to take ? — And do you believe, that this next course has not cost me some pain, to be obliged to—

There again she stopt.

But let us break off discourse, resumed she. The subject grows too—She sigh'd—Let us break off discourse—I will go in—I will prepare for church— [The devil ! thought I.] Well as I *can* appear in these every-day worn cloaths—looking upon herself—I will go to church.

She then turned from me to go into the house.

Bless me, my beloved creature, bless me with the continuance of this affecting conversation—Remorse has seized my heart ! — I have been excessively wrong—Give me further cause to curse my heedless folly, by the continuance of this calm, but soul-penetrating conversation.

No, no, Mr. Lovelace. I have said too much. Impatience begins to break in upon me. If you can excuse me to the ladies, it will be better for my mind's sake, and for your credit's sake, that I do not see them. Call me to *them* over-nice, petulant, prudish; what you please, call me to them. Nobody but Miss Howe, to whom, next to the Almighty, and my own mother, I wish to stand acquitted of wilful error, shall know the whole of what has passed. Be happy, as you may!—*Deserve* to be happy, and happy you will be, in your own reflection at least, were you to be ever so unhappy in other respects. For myself, if I shall be enabled, on due reflection, to look back upon my own conduct, without the great reproach of having wilfully, and against the light of my own judgment, erred, I shall be more happy, than if I had all that the world accounts desirable.

The noble creature proceeded; for I could not speak.

This self-acquittal, when spirits are lent me to dispel the darkness which at present too often over-clouds my mind, will, I hope, make me superior to all the calamities that can befall me.

Her whole person was informed by her sentiments. She seemed to be taller than before. How the God within her exalted her, not only above me, but above herself.

Divine creature! (as I thought her) I called her. I acknowledged the superiority of her mind; and was proceeding—But she interrupted me—All human excellence, said she, is comparative only. My mind, I believe, is indeed superior to yours, debased as yours is by evil habits. But I had not known it to be so, if you had not taken pains to convince me of the inferiority of yours.

How great, how sublimely great, this creature!—By my soul, I cannot forgive her for her virtues!—There is no bearing the consciousness of the infinite inferiority

inferiority she charged me with.—But why will she break from me, when good resolutions are taking place?—The red-hot iron she refuses to strike—O why will she suffer the yielding wax to harden?

We had gone but a few paces towards the house, when we were met by the impertinent women, with notice, that breakfast was ready. I could only, with up-lifted hands, beseech her to give me hope of a renewed conversation after breakfast.

No; she would go to church.

And into the house she went, and up-stairs directly. Nor would she oblige me with her company at the tea-table.

I offered by Mrs. Moore to quit both the table and the parlour, rather than she should exclude herself, or deprive the two widows of the favour of her company.

That was not all the matter, she told Mrs. Moore. She had been struggling to keep down her temper. It had cost her some pains to do it. She was desirous to compose herself, in hopes to receive benefit by the divine worship she was going to join in.

Mrs. Moore hoped for her presence at dinner.

She had rather be excused. Yet, if she could obtain the frame of mind she hoped for, she might not be averse to shew, that she had got above those sensibilities, which gave consideration to a man who deserved not to be to her what he had been.

This said, no doubt, to let Mrs. Moore know, that the garden-conversation had not been a reconciling one.

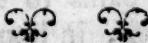
Mrs. Moore seemed to wonder, that we were not upon a better foot of understanding, after so long a conference; and the more, as she believed, that the lady had given in to the proposal for the repetition of the ceremony, which I had told them was insisted upon by her uncle Harlowe. But I accounted for this, by telling both widows, that she was resolved to

keep on the reserve, till she heard from Capt. Tomlinson, whether her uncle would be present in person at the solemnity, or would name that worthy gentleman for his proxy.

Again I enjoined strict secrecy, as to this particular; which was promised by the widows, as well for themselves, as for Miss Rawlins; of whose taciturnity they gave me such an account, as shewed me, that she was *secret-keeper-general* to all the women of fashion at Hamstead.

The Lord, Jack! What a world of mischief, at this rate, must Miss Rawlins know!—What a Pandora's box must her bosom be!—Yet, had I nothing that was more worthy of my attention to regard, I would engage to open it, and make my uses of the discovery.

And now, Belford, thou perceivest, that all my reliance is upon the mediation of Lady Betty, and Miss Montague; and upon the hope of intercepting Miss Howe's next letter.



THE fair inexorable is actually gone to church, with Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Bevis. But Will closely attends her motions; and I am in the way to receive any occasional intelligence from him.

She did not *choose* [A mighty word with the sex! as if they were always to have their own wills!] that I should wait upon her. I did not much press it, that she might not apprehend, that I thought I had reason to doubt her voluntary return.

I once had it in my head, to have found the widow Bevis other employment. And I believe she would have been as well pleased with my company as to go to church; for she seemed irresolute when I told her, that two out of a family were enough to go to church for one day. But having her things on, as the women call every-thing, and her aunt Moore expecting her company, she thought it best to go—

Left

Left it should look oddly, you know, whisper'd she, to one, who was above regarding how it look'd.

LETTER XIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sunday afternoon.

O Belford ! what a hair's-breadth escape have I had ! — Such a one, that I tremble between terror and joy, at the thoughts of what *might* have happen'd, and did not.

What a perverse girl is this, to contend with her fate, yet has reason to think, that her very stars fight against her ! I am the luckiest of men ! — But my breath almost fails me, when I reflect upon what a slender thread my destiny hung.

But not to keep thee in suspense ; I have, within this half-hour, obtained possession of the expected letter from Miss Howe—And by *such* an accident ! But here, with the former, I dispatch this ; thy messenger waiting.

LETTER XX.

Mr. LOVELACE. *In Continuation.*

THUS it was—My charmer accompanied Mrs. Moore again to church this afternoon. I had been very earnest, in the *first* place, to obtain her company at dinner : But in vain. According to what she had said to Mrs. Moore (*a*), I was *too considerable* to her to be allowed that favour. In the *next* place, I besought her to favour me, after dinner, with another garden-walk. But she *would* again go to church. And what reason have I to rejoice that she did !

My worthy friend Mrs. Bevis thought one sermon a day, *well-observed*, enough ; so stay'd at home to bear me company.

The Lady and Mrs. Moore had not been gone a

I. 4.

quarter

(a) Page 173.

quarter of an hour, when a young country-fellow on horseback came to the door, and inquired for Mrs. *Harriot Lucas*. The widow and I (undetermined how we were to entertain each other) were in the parlour next the door ; and hearing the fellow's inquiry, O my dear Mrs. Bevis, said I, I am undone, undone for ever, if you don't help me out !—Since here, in all probability, is a messenger from that implacable Miss Howe with a letter ; which, if delivered to Mrs. Lovelace, may undo all we have been doing.

What, said she, would you have me do ?

Call the maid in this moment, that I may give her her lesson ; and if it be as I imagine, I'll tell you what you shall do.

Widow. Margaret ! — Margaret ! come in this minute.

Lovel. What answer, Mrs. Margaret, did you give the man, upon his asking for Mrs. *Harriot Lucas* ?

Peggy. I only asked, What was his business, and who he came from ? (For, Sir, your Honour's servant had told me how things stood) : And I came at your call, Madam, before he answer'd me.

Lovel. Well, child, if ever you wish to be happy in wedlock yourself, and would have people disappointed, who want to make mischief between you and your husband, get out of him his message, or letter, if he has one, and bring it to me, and say nothing to Mrs. Lovelace, when she comes in ; and here is a guinea for you.

Peggy. I will do all I can to serve your Honour's Worship for nothing [Nevertheless, with a ready hand, taking the guinea]. For Mr. William tells me, what a good gentleman you be.

Away went Peggy to the fellow at the door.

Peggy. What is your business, friend, with Mrs. *Harry Lucas* ?

Fellow. I must speak to her, her own self.

Lovel.

Lovel. My dearest widow, do you personate Mrs. Lovelace—For Heaven's sake do you personate Mrs. Lovelace!

Wid. I personate Mrs. Lovelace, Sir! How can I do that?—She is fair: I am a brown woman. She is slender: I am plump—

Lovel. No matter, no matter—The fellow may be a new-come servant: He is not in livery, I see. He may not know her person. You can but be bloated, and in a dropsy.

Wid. Dropsical people look not so fresh and ruddy as I do—

Lovel. True—But the clown may not know That—'Tis but for a present deception.

Peggy, Peggy, call'd I, in a female tone, softly at the door. Madam, answer'd Peggy; and came up to me to the parlour-door.

Lovel. Tell him the Lady is ill, and has lain down upon the couch. And get his business from him, whatever you do.

Away went Peggy.

Lovel. Now, my dear widow, lie along on the settee, and put your handkerchief over your face, that, if he will speak to you himself, he may not see your eyes and your hair.—So—that's right. I'll step into the closet by you.

I did so.

Peggy. (returning) He won't deliver his business to me. He will speak to Mrs. Harry Lucas her own self.

Lovel. (holding the door in my hand) Tell him, that This is Mrs. Harriot Lucas; and let him come in. Whisper him, if he doubts, that she is bloated, dropsical, and not the woman she was.

Away went Margery.

Lovel. And now, my dear widow, let me see what a charming Mrs. Lovelace you'll make!—Ask, If he comes from Miss Howe. Ask, If he live with

her. Ask, How she does. Call her, at every word, your dear Miss Howe. Offer him money—Take this half-guinea—Complain of your head, to have a pretence to hold it down; and cover your forehead and eyes with your hand, where your handkerchief hides not your face.—That's right—And dismiss the rascal—(Here he comes)—as soon as you can.

In came the fellow, bowing and scraping, his hat poked out before him with both his hands.

Fellow. I am sorry, Madam, and please you, to find you be'n't well.

Widow. What is your business with me, friend?

Fellow. You are Mrs. Harriot Lucas, I suppose, Madam?

Widow. Yes. Do you come from Miss Howe?

Fellow. I do, Madam.

Widow. Dost thou know my right name, friend?

Fellow. I can give a shrewd guesf. But that is none of my businels.

Widow. What is thy businels? I hope Miss Howe is well.

Fellow. Yes, Madam; pure well, I thank God. I wish you were so too.

Widow. I am too full of grief to be well.

Fellow. So belike I have hard say.

Widow. My head akes so dreadfully, I cannot hold it up. I must beg of you to let me know your businels?

Fellow. Nay, and that be all, my businels is soon known. It is but to give this letter into your own partiklar hands—Here it is.

Widow. [Taking it.] From my dear friend Miss Howe?—Ah, my head!

Fellow. Yes, Madam: But I am forry you are so bad.

Widow. Do you live with Miss Howe?

Fellow. No, Madam: I am one of her tenant's sons. Her lady-mother must not know as how I came

came of this errand. But the letter, I suppose, will tell you all.

Widow. How shall I satisfy you for this kind trouble?

Fellow. Na how at all. What I do is for love of Miss Howe. She will satisfy me more than enough. But, may-hap, you can send no answer, you are so ill.

Widow. Was you order'd to wait for an answer?

Fellow. No. I can't say I was. But I was bidden to observe how you looked, and how you was; and if you did write a line or so, to take care of it, and give it only to our young landlady, in secret.

Widow. You see I look strangely. Not so well as I used to do.

Fellow. Nay, I don't know that I ever saw you but once before; and that was at a stile, where I met you and my young landlady; but knew better than to stare a gentlewoman in the face; especially at a stile.

Widow. Will you eat, or drink, friend?

Fellow. A cup of small ale, I don't care if I do.

Widow. Margaret, take the young man down, and treat him with what the house affords.

Fellow. Your servant, Madam. But I staid to eat as I came along, just upon the Heath yonder, or else, to say the truth, I had been here sooner [*Thank my stars, thought I, thou didst*]. A piece of powder'd beef was upon the table, at the sign of the Castle, where I stopt to inquire for this house: And so, thoff I only intended to whet my whistle, I could not help eating. So shall only taste of your ale; for the beef was woundily corn'd.

He withdrew, bowing and scraping.

Pox on thee, thought I: Get thee gone for a prating dog!

Margaret, whisper'd I, in a female voice, whipping out of the closet, and holding the parlour-door in my hand, Get him out of the house as fast as you

can, lest they come from church, and catch him here.
Peggy. Never fear, Sir.

The fellow went down, and, it seems, drank a large draught of ale ; and Margaret finding him very talkative, told him, she begg'd his pardon ; but she had a sweetheart just come from sea, whom she was forced to hide in the pantry ; so was sure he would excuse her from staying with him.

Ay, ay, to be sure, the clown said : *For if he could not make sport, he would spoil none.* But he whisper'd her, that one 'Squire Lovelace was a *damnation rogue*, if the truth might be told.

For what, said Margaret ? And could have given him, she said, a good dowse of the chaps.

For kissing all the women he came near.

At the same time, the dog wrapp'd himself round Margery, and gave her a smack, that, she told Mrs. Bevis afterwards, she might have heard into the parlour.

Such, Jack, is human nature : Thus does it operate in all degrees ; and so does the clown, as well as his betters, practise what he censures ; and censure what he practises ! Yet this fly dog knew not but the wench had a sweetheart lock'd up in the pantry. If the truth were known, some of the ruddy-faced dairy wenches might perhaps call him a *damnation rogue*, as justly as their betters of the same sex, might 'Squire Lovelace.

The fellow told the maid, that, by what he discern'd of the young lady's face, it look'd very *rosy* to what he took it to be ; and he thought her a good deal fatter, as she lay, and not so tall.

All women are born to intrigue, Jack ; and practise it more or less, as fathers, guardians, governesses, from dear experience can tell ; and in love-affairs are naturally expert, and quicker in their wits by half than men. This ready, tho' raw, wench gave an instance of this, and improved on the dropscandal hint I had given

given her. The lady's seeming plumpness was owing to a dropical disorder, and to the round posture she lay in—Very likely, truly. Her appearing to him to be shorter, he might have observed was owing to her drawing her feet up, from pain, and because the couch was too short, she suppos'd—Ad-so, he did not think of that. Her rosy colour was owing to her grief and head-ach—Ay, that might very well be.—But he was highly pleas'd he had given the letter into Mrs. Harriot's own hand, as he should tell Miss Howe.

He desir'd once more to see the lady, at his going away, and would not be denied. The widow therefore sat up, with her handkerchief over her face, leaning her head against the wainscot.

He asked, If she had any *partiklar* message.

No: She was so ill she could not write, which was a great grief to her.

Should he call next day? for he was going to London, now he was so near; and should stay at a cousin's that night, who lived in a street call'd Fetter-lane.

No: She would write as soon as able, and send by the post.

Well then, if she had nothing to send by him, may-hap he might stay in town a day or two; for he had never seen the Lions in the Tower, nor Bedlam, nor the Tombs; and he would make a holiday or two, as he had leave to do, if she had no business or message that required his posting down next day.

She had not.

She offered him the half-guinea I had given her for him; but he refused it, with great professions of disinterestedness, and love, as he called it, to Miss Howe; to serve whom, he would ride to the world's end, or even to Jericho.

And so the shocking rascal went away: And glad at my heart was I when he was gone; for I feared nothing

nothing so much as that he would have staid till they came from church.

Thus, Jack, got I my *heart's-ease*, the letter of Miss Howe; and thro' such a train of accidents, as makes me say, that the Lady's stars fight against her: But yet I must attribute a good deal to my own precaution, in having taken right measures: For had I not secured the widow by my stories, and the maid by my servant, all would have signified nothing. And so heartily were they secured, the one by a single guinea, the other by half a dozen warm kisses, and the aversion they both had to such wicked creatures as delighted in making mischief between man and wife, that they promised, that neither Mrs. Moore, Miss Rawlins, Mrs. Lovelace, nor anybody living, till a week at least were past, and till I gave leave, should know any thing of the matter.

The widow rejoiced that I had got the mischief-maker's letter. I excused myself to her, and instantly withdrew with it; and, after I had read it, fell to my short-hand, to acquaint thee with my good luck: And they not returning so soon as church was done (stepping, as it proved, in to Miss Rawlins's, and tarrying there a while, to bring that busy girl with them to drink tea); I wrote thus far to thee, that thou mightest, when thou camest to this place, rejoice with me upon the occasion.

They are all three just come in—I hasten to them.

LETTER XXI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

I Have begun another letter to thee, in continuation of my narrative: But I believe I shall send thee this before I shall finish that. By the inclosed thou wilt see, that neither of the correspondents deserve mercy from me: And I am resolved to make the ending with one, the beginning with the other.

If

If thou sayest, That the provocations I have given to *one* of them, will justify *her* freedoms ; I answer, So they *will* to any other person but myself. But he that is capable of giving those provocations, and has the power to punish those who abuse him for giving them, *will* shew his resentment ; and the more vindictively, perhaps, as he has *deserved* the freedoms ?

If thou sayest, It is, however, wrong to do so ; I reply, that it is nevertheless human nature :—And would'nt it not have me be a man, Jack ?

Here read the letter, if thou wilt. But thou art not my friend, if thou offereſt to plead for either of the saucy creatures, after thou *hast* read it.

To Mrs. HARRIOT LUCAS, at Mrs. MOORE's at Hamſtead.

AFTER the discoveries I had made of the villainous machinations of the *most abandoned* of men, particularized in my long letter of Wednesday last (*a*), you will believe, my dearest friend, that my surprize upon perusing yours of Thursday evening from Hamſtead (*b*) was not so great as my indignation. Had the *villain* attempted to fire a city instead of a house, I should not have wondered at it. All that I am amazed at, is, that he (whose boast, as I am told, it is, that no woman shall keep him out of her bedchamber, when he has made a resolution to be in it) did not discover *his foot* before. And it is as strange to me, that, having got you at such a shocking advantage, and in such an horrid house, you could, at the time, *escape dishonour*, and afterwards get from such a set of *infernals*.

I gave you, in my long letter of Wednesday and Thursday last, reasons why you ought to mistrust that specious Tomlinson. That man, my dear, must be a solemn villain. *May lightning from Heaven blast the wretch, who has set him, and the rest of his*

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(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 328.

(*b*) See Vol. iv. p. 348.

REMORSELESS GANG, at work, to endeavour to destroy the most consummate virtue! Heaven be praised! you have escaped from all their snares, and now are out of danger.—So I will not trouble you at present with the particulars that I have further collected relating to this abominable imposture.

For the same reason, I forbear to communicate to you some new stories of the abhorred wretch himself, which have come to my ears. One in particular, of so shocking a nature!—Indeed, my dear, the man is a devil.

The whole story of Mrs. Fretchville, and her house, I have no doubt to pronounce, likewise, an absolute fiction. —*Fellow! — How my soul spurns the villain!*

Your thought of going abroad, and your reasons for so doing, most sensibly affect me. But, be comforted, my dear; I hope you will not be under a necessity of quitting your native country. Were I sure, that That must be the cruel case, I would abandon all my own better prospects, and soon be with you. And I would accompany you whithersoever you went, and share fortunes with you: For it is impossible that I should be happy, if I knew that you were exposed not only to the perils of the sea, but to the attempts of other vile men; your personal graces attracting every eye, and exposing you to those hourly dangers, which others, less distinguished by the gifts of nature, might avoid.—All that I know, that Beauty (so greatly coveted, and so greatly admired) is good for!

O, my dear, were I ever to marry, and to be the mother of a CLARISSA (*Clariissa* must be the name, if promisingly lovely!) how often would my heart ake for the dear creature, as she grew up, when I reflected, that a prudence and discretion unexampled in woman, had not, in *you*, been a sufficient protection to that beauty, which had drawn after it as many admirers as beholders!—How little should I regret the attacks of that cruel distemper, as it is called,

called, which frequently makes the greatest ravages in the finest faces !

Sat. Afternoon.

I HAVE just parted with Mrs. Townsend (*a*). I thought you had once seen her with me: But, she says, she never had the honour to be personally known to you. She has a *manlike spirit*. She knows the world. And her two brothers being in town, she is sure she can engage them, in so good a cause, and (if there should be occasion) *both their ships crews*, in your service.

Give your consent, my dear; and the horrid *villain* shall be repaid with *broken bones*, at least, for all his *vileness*!

The misfortune is, Mrs. Townsend cannot be with you till *Thursday next*, or *Wednesday, at soonest*. Are you sure you can be safe where you are, till then? I think you are too near London; and perhaps you had better be *in it*. If you remove, let me know *whither*, the very moment.

How my heart is torn, to think of the necessity so dear a creature is driven to, of hiding herself! *Devilish fellow!* He must have been sportive and wanton in his inventions—Yet that cruel, that savage sportiveness has saved you from the sudden violence which he has had recourse to in the violation of others, of names and families not contemptible. For such the *villain* always gloried to spread his snares.

The *vileness* of this *specious monster* has done more, than any other consideration could do, to bring Mr. Hickman into credit with me. Mr. Hickman alone knows, for me, of your flight, and the reason of it. Had I not given him the reason, he might have thought *still worse* of the vile attempt. I communicated it to him by shewing him your letter from Hamstead.

(a) For the account of Mrs. Townsend, &c. see Vol. iv.
p. 103, 104, 105.

stead. When he had read it (*and he trembled and reddened*, as he read), he threw himself at my feet, and besought me to permit him to attend you, and to give you the protection of his house. The good-natured man had tears in his eyes, and was repeatedly earnest on this subject; proposing to take his chariot-and-four, or a set, and in person, in the face of all the world, give himself the glory of protecting such an oppressed innocent.

I could not but be pleased with him. And I let him know that I was. I hardly expected so much spirit from him. But a man's passiveness to a beloved object of our sex may not, perhaps, argue want of courage on proper occasions.

I thought I ought, in return, to have some consideration for his safety, as such an open step would draw upon him the vengeance of the most *villainous enterprizer* in the world, who has always a *gang of fellows*, such as himself, at his call, ready to support one another in the vilest outrages. But yet, as Mr. Hickman might have strengthened his hands by legal recourses, I should not have stood upon it, had I not known your delicacies (since such a step must have made a great noise, and given occasion for scandal, as if some advantage had been gained over you), and were there not the greatest probability, that all might be more silently, and more effectually, managed by Mrs. Townsend's means.

Mrs. Townsend will in person attend you—She *hopes*, on Wednesday.—Her brothers, and some of their people, will scatteringly, and as if they knew nothing of you (so we have contrived), see you safe not only to London, but to her house at Deptford.

She has a kinswoman, who will take your commands there, if she herself be obliged to leave you. And there you may stay, till the wretch's fury on losing you, and his search, are over.

He will very soon, 'tis likely, enter upon some new villainy, which may engross him: And it may be given out, that you are gone to lay claim to the protection of your cousin Morden at Florence.

Possibly, if he can be made to believe it, he will go over in hopes to find you there.

After a while, I can procure you a lodging in one of the neighbouring villages; where I may have the happiness to be your daily visiter. And if this Hickman be not silly, and apish, and if my mother do not do unaccountable things, I may the sooner think of marrying, that I may, without controul, receive and entertain the darling of my heart.

Many, very many, happy days, do I hope we shall yet see together: And as this is *my* hope, I expect, that it will be *your* consolation.

As to your estate, since you are resolved not to litigate for it, we will be patient, either till Col. Morden arrives, or till shame compels some people to be just.

Upon the whole, I cannot but think your prospects now much happier, than they could have been, had you been actually married to such a man as this. I must therefore congratulate you upon your escape, not only from a *horrid libertine*, but from *so vile a husband*, as he *must* have made to any woman; but more especially to a person of your virtue and delicacy.

You hate him, heartily hate him, I hope, my dear—I am sure you do. It would be strange, if so much purity of life and manners were not to abhor what is so repugnant to itself.

In your letter before me, you mention one written to me for a *feint* (*a*). I have not received any such. Depend upon it therefore, that he *must* have it. And if he has, it is a wonder, that he did not likewise get my long one of the 7th. Heaven be praised.

(a) Vol. iv. p. 351, 352—357.

praised that he did not; and that it came safe to your hands!

I send this by a young fellow, whose father is one of our tenants, with command to deliver it to no other hands but yours. He is to return directly, if you give him any letter. If not, he will proceed to London upon his own pleasures. He is a simple fellow; but very honest. So you may say any thing to him. If you write not by him, I desire a line or two, as soon as possible.

My mother knows nothing of his going to you. Nor yet of your abandoning the fellow! Forgive me!—But he's not intitled to good manners.

I shall long to hear how you and Mrs. Townsend order matters. I wish she could have been with you sooner. But I have lost no time in engaging her, as you will suppose. I refer to her, what I have further to say and advise. So shall conclude with my prayers, that Heaven will direct, and protect, my dearest creature, and make your future days happy!

ANNA HOWE.

AND now, Jack, I will suppose, that thou hast read this cursed letter. Allow me to make a few observations upon some of its contents, which I will do in my crow-quill short-hand, that they may have the appearance of notes upon the vixen's text.

It is strange to Miss Howe, that having got her friend at such a shocking advantage, &c.] And it is strange to me, too. If ever I have such another opportunity given me, the cause of both our wonder, I believe, will cease.

So thou seest Tomlinson is further detected. No such person as Mrs. Fretchville. *May lightning from heaven—O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!* — What a horrid vixen is this! — *My gang, my remorseless gang*, too, is brought in — And thou wilt plead for these girls again; wilt thou? — *Heaven be praised*, she says, that her friend is out of danger — Miss Howe should be sure of that: And that she herself is safe. — But for this termagant (as I have often said), I must surely have made a better hand of it —

New stories of me, Jack! — What can't they be? — I have not found, that my generosity to my Rosebud ever did me due credit with this pair

pair of friends. Very hard, Belford, that Credits cannot be set against Debts, and a balance struck in a Rake's favour, as well as in that of every common man!—But he, from whom no good is expected, is not allowed the merit of the good he does.

I ought to have been a little more attentive to *character*, than I have been. For, notwithstanding that the measures of Right and Wrong are said to be so manifest, let me tell thee, that *character* bypasses and runs away with all mankind. Let a man or woman once establish themselves in the world's opinion, and all that either of them do will be sanctified. Nay, in the very courts of justice, does not *character* acquit or condemn as often as facts, and sometimes even in spite of facts?—Yet, (impolitic that I have been, and am!) to be so careless of mine!—And now, I doubt, it is irretrievable.—But to leave moralizing.

Thou, Jack, knowest almost all my enterprizes worth remembering. Can this particular story, which this girl hints at, be that of Lucy Villars?—Or can she have heard of my intrigue with the pretty Gypsey, who met me in Norwood, and of the trap I caught her cruel husband in (a fellow, as gloomy and tyrannical as old Harlowe), when he pursued a wife, who would not have deserved ill of *bim*, if he had deserved well of *her*?—But he was not quite drowned. The man is alive at this day: And Miss Howe mentions the story as a very shocking one. Besides, both these are a twelvemonth old, or more.

But evil fame and scandal are always *new*. When the offender has forgot a vile fact, it is often told to one and to another, who, having never heard of it before, trumpet it about, as a novelty to others. But well said the honest corregidor at Madrid, a saying with which I enriched Lord M.'s collection—*Good actions are remembered but for a day: Bad ones for many years after the life of the guilty.*—Such is the relish that the world has for scandal. In other words, Such is the desire which every-one has to exculpate himself by blackening his neighbour. You and I, Belford, have been very kind to the world, in furnishing it with many opportunities to gratify its devil.

Miss Howe will abandon her own better prospects, and share fortunes with her, were she to go abroad.]—Charming Romancer!—I must set about this girl, Jack. I have always had hopes of a woman whose passions carry her into such altitudes!—Had I attacked Miss Howe first, her passions (inflamed and guided, as I could have managed them) would have brought her to my lure in a fortnight.

But thinkest thou (and yet I think thou dost), that there is any thing in these high flights among the sex? Verily, Jack, these vehement friendships are nothing but chaff and stubble, liable to be blown away by the very wind that raises them. Apes! mere apes of us! they think the word *friendship* has a pretty sound with it; and it is much talked of; a fashionable word: And so, truly, a single woman, who thinks she has a Soul, and knows, that she wants something, would be thought to have found a fellow-soul for it in her own Sex. But I repeat, that the word is a *mere* word, the thing a mere name with them; a cork-bottomed shuttlecock, which they are fond of striking to and fro, to make one another glow in the frosty weather of a single state; but which, when a *man* comes in between the pretended *inseparables*, is given up, like their Music, and other maidenly amusements; which, nevertheless, may be necessary to keep the pretty *rogues*

rogues out of more active mischief. They then, in short, having caught the *fisb*, lay aside the *net* (*a*).

Thou haft a mind, perhaps, to make an exception for these two ladies. With all my heart. My Clarissa has, if *woman* has, a soul capable of friendship. Her flame is bright and steady. But Miss Howe's, were it not kept up by her mother's opposition, is too vehement to endure. How often have I known opposition not only cement Friendship, but create Love? I doubt not but poor Hickman would fare the better with this vixen, if her mother were as heartily against him, as she is for him.

Thus much indeed, as to these two ladies, I will grant thee; that the active spirit of the one, and the meek disposition of the other, may make their friendship more durable than it would otherwise be; for this is certain, that in every friendship, whether male or female, there must be a man and a woman spirit (that is to say, one of them, a *forbearing* one) to make it permanent.

But this I pronounce, as a truth, which all experience confirms; that friendship between women never holds to the sacrifice of capital gratifications, or to the endangering of life, limb, or estate, as it often does in our nobler sex.

Well, but next comes an indictment against poor *Beauty*! --- What has *Beauty* done, that *Miss Howe* should be offended at it? --- *Miss Howe*, *Jack*, is a charming girl. *She* has no reason to quarrel with *Beauty*! --- Didst ever see her? --- Too much fire and spirit in her eye indeed, for a girl! --- But that's no fault with a man, that can lower that fire and spirit at pleasure; and I know I am the man that can.

A sweet auburn *Beauty*, is *Miss Howe*. A first *Beauty* among beauties, when her sweeter friend (with such a commixture of serene gracefulness, of natural elegance, of native sweetness, yet conscious, tho' not arrogant, dignity, every feature glowing with intelligence) is not in company.

The difference between the two, when together, I have sometimes delighted to *read*, in the addresses of a stranger entering into the presence of both, when standing side by side. There never was an instance, on such an occasion, where the stranger paid not his first devoirs to my Clarissa.

A respectful solemn awe sat upon every feature of the addressee's face. His eye seemed to ask leave to approach her; and lower than common, whether man or woman, was the bow or courtesy. And altho' this awe was immediately diminished by her condescending sweetness, yet went it not so entirely off, but that you might see the reverence remain, as if the person saw more of the goddess, than the woman in her.

But the moment the same stranger turns to *Miss Howe* (tho' proud and saucy, and erect and bridling, she) you will observe by the turn of his countenance, and the air of his address, a kind of equality assumed.

(a) He alludes here to the story of a pope, who, (once a poor fisherman) thro' every preferment he rose to, even to that of the cardinalate, hung up in view of all his guests, his net, as a token of humility. But, when he arrived at the pontificate, he took it down, saying, That there was no need of the net, when he had caught the fisb.

assumed. He appears to have discovered the woman in her, charming as that woman is. He smiles. He seems to expect repartee and smartness, and is never disappointed. But then visibly he prepares himself to give as well as take. He dares, after he has been a while in her company, to dispute a point with her— Every point yielded up to the other, tho' no assuming or dogmatical air compels it.

In short, with Miss Howe a bold man sees (No doubt but Sir George Colmar did), that he and she may either very soon be familiar together (I mean with innocence), or he may so far incur her displeasure, as to be forbid her presence for ever.

For my own part, when I was first introduced to this lady, which was by my godself, when she herself was a visitor at Mrs. Howe's; I had not been half an hour with her, but I even hungered and thirsted after a romping-bout with the lively rogue; and in the second or third visit, was more deterred by the delicacy of her friend, than by what I apprehended from her own. This charming creature's presence, thought I, awes us both. And I wished her absence, tho' any other lady were present, that I might try the difference in Miss Howe's behaviour before her friend's face, or behind her back.

Delicate ladies make delicate ladies, as well as decent men. With all Miss Howe's fire and spirit, it was easy to see, by her very eye, that she watched for lessons, and feared reproof from the penetrating eye of her milder-disposition'd friend (*a*): And yet it was as easy to observe, in the candor and sweet manners of the other, that the fear which Miss Howe stood in of her, was more owing to her own generous apprehension, that she fell short of her excellencies, than to Miss Harlowe's consciousness of excellence over her. I have often, since I came at Miss Howe's letters, revolved this just and fine praise contained in one of them (*b*). 'Every one saw, that the preference each gave you to herself, exalted you not into any visible triumph over her; for you had always something to say, on every point you carried, that raised the yielding heart, and left every one pleased and satisfied with herself, tho' she carried not off the palm.'

As I propose in my more advanced life, to endeavour to atone for my youthful freedoms with individuals of the sex, by giving caution and instructions to the whole, I have made a memorandum to enlarge upon this doctrine; --to wit, That it is full as necessary to direct daughters in the choice of their female companions, as it is to guard them against the designs of men.

I say not this, however, to the disparagement of Miss Howe. She has from *pride*, what her friend has from *principle*. [The Lord help the sex, if they had not pride!] --But yet I am confident, that Miss Howe is indebted to the conversation and correspondence of Miss Harlowe for her highest improvements. But, both these ladies out of the question, I make no scruple to averr [And I, Jack, should know something of the matter], that there have been more girls ruined, at least prepared for

(*a*) *Miss Howe* in vol. iii. p. 113. says, That she was always more afraid of her, than of her mother; and, in p. 215. That she fears her as much as she loves her; and in many other places, in her letters to Miss Harlowe, verifies this observation of Mr. Lovelace.

(*b*) Vol. iv. p. 23.

for ruin, by their own sex (taking in servants, as well as companions), than directly by the attempts and delusions of men.

But it is time enough, when I am old and joyless, to enlarge upon this topic.

As to the comparison between the two ladies, I will expatiate more on that subject (for I like it) when I have *bad them both*---Which this letter of the vixen girl's, I hope thou wilt allow, warrants me to try for.

I return to the consideration of a few more of its contents, to justify my vengeance, so nearly now in view.

As to Mrs. Townsend; her manlike spirit; her two brothers; and their ships crews---I say nothing but this to the insolent threatening... Let 'em come!---

But as to her sordid menace---To *repay the horrid villain*, as she calls me, for all my *wilfulness*, by BROKEN BONES!---Broken bones, Belford!---Who can bear this porterly threatening!---Broken bones, Jack!---Damn the little vulgar---Give me a name for her---But I banish all furious resentment. If I get these two girls into my power, Heaven forbid that I should be a second Phalaris, and turn his bull upon the artist! No bones of theirs will I break!---They shall come off with me upon much lighter terms!---

But these fellows are smugglers, it seems. And am not I a smuggler too?---I have not the least doubt, that I shall have secured my goods before Thursday or Wednesday either.

But did I want a plot, what a charming new one does this letter of Miss Howe strike me out? I am almost sorry, that I have fixed upon one.---For here, how easy would it be for me, to assemble a crew of swabbers, and to create a Mrs. Townsend (whose person, thou seest, my Beloved knows not) to come on Tuesday, at Miss Howe's renewed urgency, in order to carry my Beloved to a warehouse of my own providing?

This, however, is my triumphant hope, that at the very time, that these ragamuffins will be at Hamstead (looking for us), my dear Miss Harlowe and I (so the fates, I imagine, have ordained) shall be fast asleep in each other's arms in town.---Lie still, villain, till the time comes.---My heart, Jack; my heart!---It is always thumping away on the remotest prospects of this nature.

But, it seems, that the *wilfulness* of this specious monster (meaning me Jack!) has brought Hickman into credit with her. So I have done some good!---But to whom, I cannot tell: For this poor fellow, should I permit him to have this termagant, will be punished, as many times we all are, by the enjoyment of his own wishes.---Nor can she be happy, as I take it, with him, were he to govern himself by her will, and have none of his own; since never was there a directing wife, who knew where to stop: Power makes such a one wanton---She despises the man she can govern. Like Alexander, who wept, that he had no more worlds to conquer, she will be looking out for new exercises for her power, till she grow uneasy to herself, a discredit to her husband, and a plague to all about her.

But this honest fellow, it seems, with *tears in his eyes*, and with *bumble prostration*, besought the vixen to permit him to set out in his chariot and four, in order to give himself the glory of protecting such

an oppressed innocent, in the face of the whole world.---Nay, he redd'd, it seems; and trembled too! as he read the fair complainant's letter.---How valiant is all this!--Women love brave men; and no wonder, that his tears, his trembling, and his prostration, gave him high reputation with the meek Miss Howe.

But dost think, Jack, that I, in the like case (and equally affected with the distress) should have acted thus?---Dost think, that I should not first have rescued the lady, and then, if needful, have asked excuse for it, the lady in my hand?---Wouldest not thou have done thus, as well as I?

But 'tis best as it is. Honest Hickman may now sleep in a whole skin. And yet that is more perhaps than he would have done (the lady's deliverance unattempted), had I come at this requested permission of his any other way, than by a letter, that it must not be known I have intercepted.

She thinks I may be diverted from pursuing my charmer, by some new-started villainy. Villainy is a word that she is extremely fond of. But I can tell her, that it is impossible I should, till the end of this villainy be obtained. Difficulty is a stimulus with such a spirit as mine. I thought Miss Howe knew me better. Were she to offer herself, person for person, in the romancing zeal of her friendship, to save her friend, it should not do, while the dear creature is on this side the moon.

She thanks Heaven, that her friend has received her letter of the 7th. We are all glad of it. She ought to thank me too. But I will not at present claim her thanks.

But when she rejoices, that that letter went safe, does she not, in effect, call out for vengeance, and expect it?---All in good time, Miss Howe. When settest thou out for the Isle of Wight, Love?

I will close at this time with desiring thee to make a list of the virulent terms with which the inclosed letter abounds: And then, if thou supposest, that I have made such another, and have added to it all the flowers of the same blow, in the former letters of the same saucy creature, and those in that of Miss Harlowe, left for me on her elopement, thou wilt certainly think, that I have provocations sufficient to justify me in all I shall do to either.

Return the inclosed the moment thou hast perused it.

LETTER XXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

Sunday Night—Monday Morning.

I WENT down with revenge in my heart; the contents of Miss Howe's letter almost engrossing me, the moment that Miss Harlowe and Mrs. Moore, accompanied by Miss Rawlins, came in: But in my

countenance all the gentle, the placid, the serene, that the glass could teach ; and in my behaviour all the polite, that such an unpolite creature, as she has often told me I am, could put on.

Miss Rawlins was sent for home, almost as soon as she came in, to entertain an unexpected visiter ; to her great regret, as well as to the disappointment of my fair one, as I could perceive from the looks of both : For they had agreed, it seems, if I went to town, as I said I intended to do, to take a walk upon the heath ; at least in Mrs. Moore's garden ; and who knows, what might have been the issue, had the spirit of curiosity in the one met with the spirit of communication in the other ?

Miss Rawlins promised to return, if possible : But sent to excuse herself ; her visiter intending to stay with her all night.

I rejoiced in my heart, at her message ; and after much supplication obtained the favour of my Beloved's company for another walk in the garden, having, as I told her, abundance of things to say, to propose, and to be informed of, in order ultimately to govern myself in my future steps.

She had vouchsafed, I should tell thee, with eyes turned from me, and in an *half-aside* attitude, to sip two dishes of tea in my company—Dear soul !—How anger *unpolishes* the most polite ! for I never saw Miss Harlowe behave so awkwardly. I imagined she knew not how to be awkward.

When we were in the garden, I poured my whole soul into her attentive ear ; and besought her returning favour.

She told me, that she had formed her scheme for her future life : That, vile as the treatment was which she had received from me, that was not all the reason she had for rejecting my suit : But that, on the maturest deliberation, she was convinced, that she could neither

neither be happy with me, nor make me happy ; and she enjoined me, for both our sakes, to think no more of her.

The Captain, I told her, was rid down post in a manner, to forward my wishes with her uncle.

Lady Betty and Miss Montague were undoubtedly arrived in town by this time.

I would set out early in the morning to attend them.

They adored her. They longed to see her. They would see her.—They would not be denied her company into Oxfordshire.

Where could she better go, to be free from her brother's insults ?—Where, to be absolutely made unapprehensive of any-body else ?—Might I have any hopes of her returning favour, if Miss Howe could be prevailed upon to intercede for me ?

Miss Howe prevailed upon to intercede for you ! repeated she, with a scornful bridle, but a very pretty one.—And there she stopt.

I repeated the concern it would be to me, to be under a necessity of mentioning the misunderstanding to Lady Betty and my cousin, as a misunderstanding still to be made up ; and as if I were of very little consequence to a dear creature, who was of so much to me ; urging, that it would extremely lower me, not only in my own opinion, but in that of my relations.

But still she referred to Miss Howe's next letter ; and all the concession I could bring her to in this whole conference, was, that she would wait the arrival and visit of the two ladies, if they came in a day or two, or before she received the expected letter from Miss Howe.

Thank Heaven for this ! thought I. And now may I go to town with hopes at my return to find thee, dearest, where I shall leave thee.

But yet I shall not intirely trust to this, as she may

K 2 find

find reasons to change her mind in my absence. My fellow, therefore, who is in the house, and who, by Mrs. Bevis's kind intelligence, will know every step she can take, shall have Andrew and a horse ready, to give me immediate notice of her motions; and moreover, go where she will, he shall be one of her retinue, tho' unknown to herself, if possible.

This was all I could make of the fair Inexorable. Should I be glad of it, or sorry for it?—

Glad, I believe: And yet my pride is confoundedly abated to think, that I had so little hold in the affections of this daughter of the Harlowes.

Don't tell me, that virtue and principle are her guides on this occasion!—'Tis *pride*, a greater pride than my own, that governs her. Love, she has none, thou seest; nor ever had; at least not in a superior degree.—Love never was under the dominion of *prudence*, or of any *reasoning* power.—She cannot bear to be thought a *woman*, I warrant!—And if, in the last attempt, I find her *not* one, what will she be the worse for the tryal?—No one is to blame for suffering an evil he cannot shun or avoid.

Were a general to be overpower'd, and robb'd by a highwayman, would he be less fit for the command of an army on that account?—If indeed the general, pretending great valour, and having boasted, that he never would be robb'd, were to make but faint resistance, when he was brought to the test, and to yield his purse when he was master of his own sword, then indeed will the highwayman, who robs him, be thought the braver man.

But from these last conferences am I furnished with an argument in defence of my favourite purpose, which I never yet pleaded.

O Jack! what a difficulty must a man be allowed to have, to conquer a predominant passion, be it what it will, when the gratifying of it is in his *power*, however wrong he knows it to be to resolve to gratify

tify it ! Reflect upon this ; and then wilt thou be able to account for, if not to excuse, a projected crime, which has *habit* to plead for it, in a breast as stormy, as uncontrollable !—

This my new argument—

Should she fail in the trial ; should I succeed ; and should she refuse to go on with me ; and even to marry me ; which I can have no notion of—And should she disdain to be obliged to me for the handsome provision I should be proud to make for her, even to the *half of my estate* ; yet cannot she be altogether unhappy—Is she not intitled to an independent fortune ? Will not Col. Morden, as her trustee, put her in possession of it ? And did she not, in our former conference, point out the *way of life*, that she always preferred to the *married life*?—“ To “ take her good Norton for her directress and guide, “ and to live upoh her own estate in the manner her “ grandfather desired she should live (*a*) ?

It is moreover to be considered, that she cannot, according to her own notions, recover above *one half* of her fame, were we now to intermarry ; so much does she think she has suffered by her going off with me. And will she not be always repining and mourning for the loss of the *other half*?—And if she must live a life of such uneasiness and regret for *half*, may she not as well repine and mourn for the *whole* ?

Nor, let me tell thee, will her own scheme of penitence, in this case, be half so perfect, if she do not fall, as if she *does* : For what a foolish penitent will she make, who has nothing to repent of ?—She piques herself, thou knowest, and makes it matter of reproach to me, that she went not off with me by her own consent ; but was tricked out of herself.

Nor upbraid thou me upon the meditated breach of vows so repeatedly made. She will not, thou seest,

permit me to fulfil them. And if she *would*, this I have to say, that at the time I made the most solemn of them, I was fully determined to keep them. But what prince thinks himself obliged any longer to observe the articles of the most sacredly sworn-to treaties, than suits with his interest or inclination; altho' the consequence of the infraction must be, as he knows, the destruction of thousands?

Is not this then the result of all, that Miss Clarissa Harlowe, if it be not her own fault, may be as virtuous *after* she has lost her honour, as it is called, as she was *before*? She may be a more eminent example to her sex; and if she yield (a *little* yield) in the tryal, may be a *completer penitent*. Nor can she, but by her own wilfulness, be reduced to *low fortunes*.

And thus may her *old* nurse and she; an *old* coachman; and a pair of *old* coach-horses; and two or three *old* maid-servants, and perhaps a *very old* footman or two (for every thing will be *old* and penitential about her), live very comfortably together; reading *old* sermons, and *old* prayer-books; and relieving *old* men, and *old* women; and giving *old* lessons, and *old* warnings, upon new subjects, as well as *old* ones, to the young ladies of her neighbourhood; and so pass on to a good *old* age, doing a great deal of good, both by precept and example, in her generation.

And is a lady, who can live thus prettily, without *controul*; who ever did prefer, and who *still* prefers, the *Single* to the *Married life*; and who will be enabled to do every thing, that the plan she had formed will direct her to do; be said to be ruined, undone, and such sort of stuff?—I have no patience with the pretty fools, who use those strong words, to describe the most transitory evil; and which a mere church-form makes none?

At this rate of romancing, how many flourishing
ruins

ruins dost thou, as well as I, know? Let us but look about us, and we shall see some of the haughtiest, and most censorious spirits among our acquaintance of that sex, now passing for chaste wives, of whom, strange stories might be told; and others, whose husband's hearts have been, made to ake for their gaieties, both before and after marriage; and yet know not half so much of them, as some of us honest fellows could tell them.

But, having thus satisfied myself in relation to the worst that can happen to this charming creature; and that it will be her own fault, if she be unhappy; I have not at all reflected upon what is likely to be my own lot.

This has always been my notion, tho' Miss Howe grudges us the best of the sex, and says, that the worst is too good for us (*a*); That the wife of a libertine ought to be pure, spotless, uncontaminated. To what purpose has such a one lived a free life, but to know the world, and to make his advantages of it?—And, to be very serious, it would be a misfortune to the public, for two persons, heads of a family, to be both bad; since, between two such, a race of varlets might be propagated, Lovelaces and Belfords, if thou wilt, who might do great mischief in the world.

Thou seest at bottom, that I am not an abandoned fellow; and that there is a mixture of gravity in me. This, as I grow older, may increase; and when my active capacity begins to abate, I may sit down with the Preacher, and resolve all my past life into vanity and vexation of spirit.

This is certain, that I shall never find a woman so well suited to my taste, as Miss Clarissa Harlowe. I only wish (if I live to see that day), that I may have such a lady as her to comfort and adorn my setting-fun. I have often thought it very unhappy for us both, that so excellent a creature sprung up a little

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too

too late for my *setting-out*, and a little too early in my *progress*, before I can think of *returning*. And yet, as I have pick'd up the sweet traveller in my way, I cannot help wishing, that she would bear me company in the *rest* of my journey, altho' she were to step out of her own path to oblige me. And then, perhaps, we could put up in the *evening* at the same *inn*; and be very happy in each other's conversation; recounting the difficulties and dangers we had pass'd in our way to it.

I imagine, that thou wilt be apt to suspect, that some paſſages in this letter were written in town. Why, Jack, I cannot but say, that the Westminster air is a little grosser than that at Hamſtead; and the conveſation of Mrs. Sinclair, and the Nymphs, leſs innocent than Mrs. Moore's and Miss Rawlins's. And I think in my heart, that I can ſay and write those things at one place, which I cannot at the other; nor indeed any-where else.

I came to town about ſeven this morning.—All neceſſary direc‐tions and precautions remember'd to be given.

I beſought the favour of an audience before I ſet out. I was deſirous to ſee which of her lovely faces ſhe was pleafed to put on, after another night had paſſed. But ſhe was reſolved, I found, to leave our quarrel open. She would not give me an opportunity ſo much as to intreat her again to close it, before the arrival of Lady Betty and my couſin.

I had notice from my proctor, by a few lines brought by man and horse, just before I ſet out, that all diſculties had been for two days paſt ſurmounted; and that I might have the licence for fetching.

I ſent up the letter to my Beloved, by Mrs. Bevis. It pro‐cured me not admittance, tho' my request for that, was ſent with it.

And now, Belford, I ſet out upon buſineſſ.

LETTER XXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Monday, June 12.

DIDST ever see a Licence, Jack?

N. N. by divine permission, Lord Bishop of London,
To our well-beloved in Christ Robert Lovelace [Your
servant, my good Lord! What have I done to merit
so much goodness, who never saw your Lordship in
my life?], of the parish of St. Martin's in the Fields,
Batchelor, and Clarissa Harlowe of the same parish,
Spinster, sendeth greeting.—WHEREAS ye are,
as is alleged, determined to enter into the holy state of
matrimony [This is only alleged, thou observest], by
and with the consent of, &c. &c. &c. and are very
desirous of obtaining your marriage to be solemnized in
the face of the church: We are willing, that such your
honest desires [Honest desires, Jack!] may more speedily
have their due effect: And therefore, that ye may be
able to procure such marriage to be freely and lawfully
solemnized in the parish-church of St. Martin in the
Fields, or St. Giles's in the Fields, in the county of
Middlesex, by the rector, vicar, or curate thereof, at
any time of the year [At ANY time of the year,
Jack!], without publication of bannes: Provided, that
by reason of any precontract [I verily think, that I
have had three or four precontracts in my time; but
the good girls have not claimed upon them of a long
time], consanguinity, affinity, or any other lawful cause
whatsoever, there be no lawful impediment in this behalf;
and that there be not at this time any action, suit,
plaint, quarrel, or demand, moved or depending before
any judge ecclesiastical or temporal, for or concerning
any marriage contracted by or with either of you; and
that the said marriage be openly solemnized in the church
above-mentioned, between the hours of eight and twelve
in the forenoon; and without prejudice to the minister
of the place where the said woman is a parishioner: We

do hereby, for good causes [It cost me—Let me see, Jack—What did it cost me?], give and grant our licence, or faculty, as well to you the parties contracting, as to the rector, vicar, or curate of the said church, where the said marriage is intended to be solemnized, to solemnize the same in manner and form above-specified, according to the rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Book of Common-prayer in that behalf published by authority of parliament. Provided always, That if hereafter any fraud shall appear to have been committed, at the time of granting this licence, either by false suggestions, or concealment of the truth [Now this, Bel-ford, is a little hard upon us: For I cannot say, that every one of our suggestions is literally true:—So, in good conscience, I ought not to marry under this licence], the licence shall be void to all intents and purposes, as if the same had not been granted. And in that case, we do inhibit all ministers whatsoever, if any thing of the premises shall come to their knowledge, from proceeding to the celebration of the said marriage, without first consulting Us, or our Vicar-general. Given, &c.

Then follow the register's name, and a large pendant seal, with these words round it — **SEAL OF THE VICAR-GENERAL AND OFFICIAL-PRINCIPAL OF THE DIOCESE OF LONDON.**

A good whimsical instrument, take it all together! — But what, thinkest thou, are the arms to this matrimonial harbinger? — Why, in the first place, *Two crossed swords*; to shew, that marriage is a state of offence as well as defence: *Three lions*; to denote, that those who enter into the state, ought to have a triple proportion of courage. And (couldst thou have imagined, that these priestly fellows, in so solemn a case, would cut their jokes upon poor souls, who come to have their honest desires put in a way to be gratified?) there are *three crooked horns*, smartly top-knotted with ribbands; which being the Ladies wear, seem to indicate, that they may very probably adorn, as well as bestow, the bull's feather. To

To describe it according to heraldry-art, if I am not mistaken—Gules, two swords, saltire-wise, Or; second coat, a chevron fable between three bugle-horns, Or [So it ought to be]: On a chief of the second, three lions rampant of the first—But the devil take them for their hieroglyphics, should I say, if I were determined in good earnest to marry!

And determined to marry I would be, were it not for this consideration; That once married, and I am married for life.

That's the plague of it! — Could a man do as the birds do, change every Valentine's day [A natural appointment! for birds have not the *sense*, forsooth, to fetter themselves, as we wiseacre men take great and solemn pains to do]; there would be nothing at all in it. And what a glorious time would the *Lawyers* have, on the one hand, with their *Noverint universi's*, and suits commenceable on restitution of goods and chattels; and the *Parsons*, on the other, with their indulgencies (renewable annually, as *other* licences) to the *honest desires* of their clients?

Then, were a stated mulct, according to rank or fortune, to be paid on every change, towards the exigencies of the State [But none on renewals with the *old loves*, for the sake of encouraging constancy, especially among the *minores*], the change would be made sufficiently difficult, and the whole Public would be the better for it; while those children, which the parents could not agree about maintaining, might be considered as the *children of the Public*, and provided for like the children of the antient Spartans; who were (as ours would in this case be) a nation of heroes. How, Jack, could I have improved upon Lycurgus's institutions, had I been a lawgiver (*a*)?

(a) Did I never shew thee a scheme, which I drew up on such a notion as this? --- In which I demonstrated the *conveniencies*, and obviated the *inconveniencies*, of changing the present mode to this? I believe I never did.

I remember I proved, to a demonstration, that such a change would
K 6 be

be a means of annihilating, absolutely annihilating, four or five very atrocious and capital sins.—*Rapes*, vulgarly so called; Adultery, and Fornication; nor would Polygamy be panting after. Frequently would it prevent Murders and Duelling: Hardly any such thing as Jealousy (the cause of shocking violences) would be heard of: And Hypocrisy between man and wife be banished the bosoms of each. Nor, probably, would the reproach of barrenness rest, as now it too often does, where it is least deserved.—Nor would there, possibly, be such a person as a barren woman.

Moreover, what a multitude of domestic quarrels would be avoided, were such a scheme carried into execution? Since both sexes would bear with each other, in the view that they could help themselves in a few months.

And then what a charming subject for conversation would be the gallant and generous last partings between man and wife! Each, perhaps, a new mate in eye, and rejoicing secretly in the manumission, could afford to be complaisantly sorrowful in appearance. “He presented her with this jewel, it will be said by the reporter, for example sake: She him with that: How he wept! How she sopp'd! How they looked after one another!” Yet, that's the jest of it, neither of them wishing to stand another twelvemonth's trial.

And if giddy fellows, or giddy girls, misbehave in a first marriage, whether from noviceship, having expected to find more in the matter than can be found; or from perverseness on her part, or positiveness on his, each being mistaken in the other [A mighty difference, Jack, in the same person, an inmate, or a visitor]; what a fine opportunity will each have, by this scheme, of recovering a lost character, and of setting all right, in the next adventure?

And O Jack, with what joy, with what rapture, would the change-lings (or changeables, if thou like that word better) number the weeks, the days, the hours, as the annual obligation approached to its desirable period!

As for the Spleen or Vapours, no such malady would be known or heard of. The Physical tribe would, indeed, be the sufferers, and the only sufferers; since fresh health and fresh spirits, the consequences of sweet blood and sweet humours (the mind and body continually pleased with each other), would perpetually flow in; and the joys of expectation, the highest of all our joys, would salubriate and keep all alive.

But, that no Body of men might suffer, the Physicians, I thought, might turn parsons, as there would be a great demand for parsons. Besides, as they would be partakers in the general benefit, they must be sorry fellows indeed, if they preferred Themselves to the Public.

Every one would be married a dozen times, at least. Both men and women would be careful of their characters, and polite in their behaviour, as well as delicate in their persons, and elegant in their dress (a great matter each of these, let me tell thee, to keep passion alive), either to induce a renewal with the old love, or to recommend themselves to a new. While the news-papers would be crowded with paragraphs, all the world their readers, as all the world would be concerned to see who and who's together.—

“ Yesterday, for instance, enter'd into the holy state of matrimony” [We should all speak reverently of matrimony then] “ the Right Honourable Robert Earl Lovelace” [I shall be an Earl by that time], “ with

"with her Grace the Duchess dowager of Fifty-manors; his Lordship's one-and-thirtieth wife."---I shall then be contented, perhaps, to take up, as it is called, with a widow. But she must not have had more than one husband neither. Thou knowest, that I am nice in these particulars.

I know, Jack, that thou, for thy part, wilt approve of my scheme.

As Lord M. and I, between us, have three or four Boroughs at command, I think I will get into Parliament, in order to bring in a Bill for this good purpose.

Neither will the houses of Parliament, nor the houses of Convocation, have reason to object to it. And all the Courts, whether *spiritual* or *senzial, civil* or *uncivil*, will find their account in it, when passed into a Law.

By my soul, Jack, I should be apprehensive of a general insurrection, and that incited by the Women, were such a Bill to be thrown out.---For here is the excellency of the scheme: The women will have equal reason with the men to be pleased with it.

Dost think, that *old prerogative Harlowe*, for example, must not, if such a Law were in being, have pulled in his horns? --- So excellent a lady as he has, would never else have *renewed* with such a gloomy tyrant: Who, as well as all other tyrants, must have been upon good behaviour from year to year.

A termagant wife, if such a Law were to pass, would be a phoenix.

The *churches* would be the only *market-places* for the fair sex; and *domestic excellence* the capital recommendation.

Nor would there be an *old maid* in Great Britain, and all its territories. For what an odd soul must she be, who could not have her *twelvemonth's trial*?

In short, a total alteration for the better, in the *moral*s and *way of life* in both sexes, must, in a very few years, be the consequence of such a salutary Law.

Who would have expected such a one from me? I wish the devil owe me not a spite for it.

Then would not the distinction be very pretty, Jack; as in flowers; --- Such a gentleman, or such a lady, is an *ANNUAL*--Such a one a *PERENNIAL*.

One difficulty, however, as I remember, occurred to me, upon the probability that a wife might be *enfient*, as the lawyers call it. But thus I obviated it.

That no man should be allowed to marry another woman without his then wife's consent, till she were brought-to-bed, and he had defray'd all incident charges; and till it was agreed upon between them, whether the child should be *his, hers*, or the *public's*. The women, in this case, to have what I call the *coercive option*: For I would not have it in the man's power to be a dog neither.

And indeed, I gave the turn of the scale, in every part of my scheme, in the women's favour: For dearly do I love the sweet rogues.

How infinitely more preferable this my scheme, than the polygamy one of the old patriarchs; who had wives and concubines without number! I believe David and Solomon had their hundreds *at a time*. Had they not, Jack?

Let me add, That *annual Parliaments*, and *annual Marriages*, are the projects next my heart. How could I expatiate upon the benefits that would arise from both!

L E T T E R.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

WELL, but now my plots thicken ; and my employment of writing to thee on this subject will soon come to a conclusion. For now, having got the licence ; and Mrs. Townsend, with her tars, being to come to Hamstead next Wednesday or Thursday ; and another letter possibly, or message, from Miss Howe, to inquire how Miss Harlowe does, upon the rustic's report of her ill health, and to express her wonder, that she has not heard from her, in answer to hers on her escape ;—I must soon blow up the lady, or be blown up myself. And so I am preparing, with Lady Betty and my cousin Montague, to wait upon my Beloved with a coach and four, or a set ; for Lady Betty will not stir out with a pair, for the world ; tho' but for two or three miles. And this is a well-known part of her character.

But as to her arms and crest upon the coach and trappings ?

Dost thou not know, that a Blunt's must supply her, while her own is new-lining and repairing ? An opportunity she is willing to take now she is in town. Nothing of this kind can be done to her mind in the country. Liveries nearly Lady Betty's.

Thou hast seen Lady Betty Lawrance several times—Hast thou not, Belford ?

No, never in my life.

But thou hast ; and lain with her too ; or fame does thee more credit than thou deservest — Why, Jack, knowest thou not Lady Betty's other name ?

Other name !—Has she two ?

She has. And what thinkest thou of Lady Bab. Wallis ?

O the devil !

Now thou hast it. Lady Barbara, thou knowest, listed

listed up in circumstances, and by pride, never appears, or produces herself, but on occasions special—To pass to men of quality or price, for a duchess, or countess, at least. She has always been admired for a grandeur in her air, that few women of quality can come up to: And never was supposed to be other than what she passed for; tho' often and often a paramour for Lords.

And who, thinkest thou, is my cousin Montague?

Nay, how should I know?

How indeed! Why, my little Johanetta Golding, a lively, yet modest-looking girl, is my cousin Montague.

There, Belford, is an aunt!—There's a cousin! Both have wit at will. Both are accustomed to ape quality. Both are genteelly descended. Mistresses of themselves; and well educated—Yet past pity. True *Spartan* dames; ashamed of nothing but *detection*—Always, therefore, upon their guard against that. And in their own conceit, when assuming top parts, the very quality they ape.

And how dost think I dress them out? — I'll tell thee.

Lady Betty in a rich gold tissue, adorned with jewels of high price.

My cousin Montague in a pale pink, standing an end with silver flowers of her own working. Charlotte, as well as my Beloved, is admirable at her needle. Not quite so richly jewel'd out as Lady Betty; but ear-rings and solitaire very valuable, and infinitely becoming.

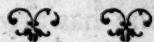
Johanetta, thou knowest, has a good complexion, a fine neck, and ears remarkably fine.—So has Charlotte. She is nearly of Charlotte's stature too.

Laces both, the richest that could be procured.

Thou canst not imagine what a sum the loan of the jewels cost me; tho' but for three days.

This sweet girl will half ruin me. But feest thou not

not by this time, that her reign is short?—It must be so. And Mrs. Sinclair has already prepared everything for her reception once more.



HERE come the ladies—Attended by Susan Morrison, a tenant-farmer's daughter, as Lady Betty's woman; with her hands before her, and thoroughly instructed.

How dres advantages women!—especially those, who have naturally a genteel air and turn, and have had education!

Hadst thou seen how they paraded it—Cousin, and Cousin, and Nephew, at every word; Lady Betty bridling and looking haughtily-condescending: Charlotte galanting her fan, and swimming over the floor without touching it.

How I long to see my niece-elect! cries one—For they are told, that we are not married; and are pleased, that I have not put the slight upon them, that they had apprehended from me.

How I long to see my dear cousin that is to be, the other!

Your La'ship, and your La'ship, and an awkward courtesy at every address, prim Susan Morrison.

Top your parts, ye villains!—You know how nicely I distinguish. There will be no passion in *this case* to blind the judgment, and to help on meditated delusion, as when you engage with titled sinners. My charmer is as cool and as distinguishing, tho' not quite so learned in her own sex, as I am. Your commonly-assumed dignity won't do for me now. Airs of superiority, as if *born* to rank.—But no over-do!—Doubting nothing. Let not your faces arraign your hearts.

Easy and unaffected!—Your very dresses will give you pride enough.

A little *graver*, Lady Betty. More significance, less bridling, in your dignity.

That's

That's the air ! Charmingly hit—Again—You have it.

Devil take you !—Less arrogance. You are got into airs of *young quality*. Be less sensible of your new condition. People born to dignity command respect without needing to require it.

Now for *your* part, cousin Charlotte !—

Pretty well. But a little too frolicky that air—Yet have I prepared my Beloved to expect in you both, great vivacity and quality-freedom.

Curse those eyes !—Those glancings will never do. A down-cast bashful turn, if you can command it—Look upon me. Suppose me now to be my Beloved.

Devil take that leer. Too *significantly arch* !—Once I knew you the girl I would now have you to be.

Sprightly, but not confident, cousin Charlotte !—Be sure forget not to look down, or aside, when looked at. When eyes meet eyes, be yours the retreating ones. Your face will bear examination.

O Lord ! O Lord ! that so young a creature can so soon forget the innocent appearance she first charmed by ; and which I thought born with you all !—Five years to ruin what Twenty had been building up ! How natural the latter lesson ! How difficult to regain the former !

A stranger, as I hope to be saved, to the principal arts of your sex ! — Once more, what-a-devil has your heart to do in your eyes ?

Have I not told you, that my Beloved is a great observer of the eyes ? She once quoted upon me a text (*a*), which shewed me how she came by her

(a) Eccl. xxvi. *The whoredom of a woman may be known in her haughty looks and eye-lids. Watch over an impudent eye, and marvel not if it trespass against thee.*

knowlege.—Dorcas's were found guilty of treason the first moment she saw her.

Once more, suppose me to be my charmer.—Now you are to encounter my examining eye, and my *doubting heart*—

That's my dear !
Study that air in the pier-glass !—

Charming !—Perfectly right !
Your honours, now, devils !—

Pretty well, cousin Charlotte, for a young country lady !—Till form yields to familiarity, you *may* courtesy low. You must not be supposed to have forgot your boarding-school airs.

But too low, too low, Lady Betty, for your years and your quality. The common fault of your sex will be your danger : Aiming to be young too long !—The devil's in you all, when you judge of yourselves by your wishes, and by your vanity ! Fifty will then never be more than Fifteen.

Graceful ease, conscious dignity, like that of my charmer, O how hard to hit !

Both together now—

Charming !—That's the air, Lady Betty !—That's the cue, cousin Charlotte, suited to the character of each !—But, once more, be sure to have a guard upon your eyes.

Never fear, nephew !—

Never fear, cousin.

A dram of Barbados each —

And now we are gone—

LETTER XXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

At Mrs. Sinclair's, Monday Afternoon.

ALL's right, as heart can wish!—In spite of all objection—in spite of a reluctance next to fainting—In spite of all her foresight, vigilance, suspicion, once more is the charmer of my soul in her new lodgings!

Now throbs away every pulse! Now thump, thump, thumps my bounding heart for something!

But I have not time for the particulars of our management.

My Beloved is now directing some of her cloaths to be packed up—Never more to enter this house! Nor ever more will she, I dare say, when once again out of it!

Yet not so much as a condition of forgiveness!—The Harlowe-spirited Fair-one will not deserve my mercy!—She will wait for Miss Howe's next letter; and then, if she find a *difficulty in her new schemes* [Thank her for nothing]—will—Will what?—Why even *then* will take time to consider, whether I am to be forgiven, or for ever rejected. An indifference that revives in my heart the remembrance of a thousand of the like nature.—And yet Lady Betty and Miss Montague [One would be tempted to think, Jack, that they wish her to provoke my vengeance] declare, that I ought to be satisfied with such a proud suspension!

They are intirely attached to her. Whatever she says *is, must be*, gospel!—They are guarantees for her return to Hamstead this night. They are to go back with her. A supper bespoke by Lady Betty at Mrs. Moore's. All the vacant apartments there, by my permission (for I had engaged them for a month certain), to be filled with them and their attendants,

for

for a week at least, or till they can prevail upon the dear Perverse, as they hope they shall, to restore me to her favour, and to accompany Lady Betty to Oxfordshire.

The dear creature has thus far condescended—That she will write to Miss Howe, and acquaint her with the present situation of things.

If she write, I shall see what she writes. But I believe she will have other employment soon.

Lady Betty is sure, she tells her, that she shall prevail upon her to forgive me; tho' she dares say, that I deserve not forgiveness. Lady Betty is too delicate to inquire strictly into the nature of my offence. But it must be an offence against herself, against Miss Montague, against the virtuous of the whole Sex, or it could not be so highly resented. Yet she will not leave her till she forgive me, and till she see our nuptials privately celebrated. Mean time, as she approves of her uncle's expedient, she will address her as *already my wife, before strangers.*

Stedman her solicitor may attend her for orders, in relation to her Chancery-affair, at Hamstead. Not one hour they can be favoured with, will they lose from the company and coversation of so dear, so charming a new relation.

Hard then if she had not obliged them with her company, in their coach-and-four, to and from their cousin Leeson's, who longed (as they themselves had done) to see a lady so justly celebrated!

‘ How will Lord M. be raptured when he sees her,
‘ and can salute her as his niece !

‘ How will Lady Sarah blefs herself !—She will
‘ now think her loss of the dear daughter she mourns
‘ for, happily supplied !’

Miss Montague dwells upon every word that falls from her lips. She perfectly adores her new cousin :
‘ For her cousin she *must* be. And her cousin will
‘ she call her ! She answers for equal admiration in her
‘ sister Patty.

‘ Ay,

‘ Ay, cry I (whispering loud enough for her to hear), how will my cousin Patty’s dove’s eyes glisten, and run over, on the very first interview ! — So gracious, so noble, so unaffected a dear creature !’

“ What a happy family,” chorus we all, “ will ours be !”

These, and such-like congratulatory admirations, every hour repeated : Her modesty hurt by the ecstatic praises :—‘ Her graces are too natural to herself, for her to be proud of them :—But she must be content to be punished for excellencies that cast a shade upon the *most* excellent !’

In short, we are here, as at Hamstead, all joy and rapture : All of us, except my beloved, in whose sweet face [her almost fainting reluctance to re-enter these doors not overcome] reigns a kind of anxious serenity ! — But how will even *that* be changed in a few hours !

Methinks I begin to pity the half-apprehensive Beauty !—But avaunt, thou unseasonably-intruding pity ! Thou hast more than once, already, well nigh undone me !—And, Adieu reflection ! Begone consideration ! and commiseration ! I dismiss ye all, for, at least, a week to come !—Be remembred her broken word ! Her flight, when my fond soul was meditating mercy to her !—Be remembred her treatment of me, in her letter on her escape to Hamstead !—Her Hamstead virulence !—What is it she ought not to expect from an unchained Beelzebub, and a plotting villain ?

Be her preference of the single life to *me*, also remembred !—That she despises me !—That she even refuses to be my **WIFE** !—A proud Lovelace to be denied a *Wife* ! — To be more proudly rejected by a daughter of the *Harlowes* !—The ladies of my own family [She thinks them the ladies of my family] supplicating in vain for her returning favour to their despised kinsman, and taking laws from her still prouder punctilio !

Be the execrations of her vixen friend likewise remembred, poured out upon me from her representations, and thereby made her own execrations!

Be remembred still more particularly, the Townsend plot, set on foot between them, and now, in a day or two, ready to break out; and the sordid threatenings thrown out against me by that little fury.

Is not *this* the crisis for which I have been long waiting? Shall Tomlinson, shall these women, be engaged; shall so many engines be set at work, at an immense expence, with infinite contrivance; and all to no purpose?

Is not *this* the hour of her trial—And in *her*, of the trial of the virtue of her whole Sex, so long pre-meditated, so long threatened?—Whether her frost is frost indeed? Whether her virtue is principle? Whether, if *once subdued*, *she will not be always subdued*? And will she not want the very crown of her glory, the proof of her till now all-surpassing excellence, if I stop short of the ultimate trial?

Now is the end of purposes long over-awed, often suspended, at hand. And need I to throw the sins of her cursed family into the too weighty scale?

Abhorred be force!—Be the thoughts of force! There's no triumph over the will in force! This I know I have said (*a*). But would I not have avoided it, if I could?—Have I not try'd every other method? And have I any other recourse left me? Can she resent the *last outrage* more than she has resented a fainter effort?—And if her resentments run ever so high, cannot I repair by matrimony?—She will not refuse me, I know, Jack; the haughty Beauty will not refuse me, when her pride of being corporally inviolate is brought down; when she can tell no tales, but when (be her resistance what it will) even her own sex will suspect a yielding in resistance; and when

(a). Vol. iv. p. 169.

when that modesty, which may fill her bosom with resentment, will lock up her speech.

But how know I, that I have not made my own difficulties?—Is she not a woman?—What redress lies for a perpetrated evil?—Must she not live?—Her piety will secure her life.—And will not time be my friend?—What, in a word, will be her behaviour afterwards?—She cannot fly me!—She must forgive me — And, as I have often said, *once forgiven, will be for ever forgiven.*

Why then should this enervating pity unsteel my foolish heart?—

It shall not. All these things will I remember; and think of nothing else, in order to keep up a resolution, which the women about me will have it I shall be still unable to hold.

I'll teach the dear charming creature to emulate me in contrivance!—I'll teach her to weave webs and plots against her conqueror!—I'll shew her, that in her smuggling schemes she is but a spider compared to me, and that she has all this time been spinning only a cobweb!



WHAT shall we do now!—We are immersed in the depth of grief and apprehension!—How ill do women bear disappointment!—Set upon going to Hamstead, and upon quitting for ever a house she re-enter'd with infinite reluctance; what things she intended to take with her, ready pack'd up; herself on tip-toe to be gone; and I prepared to attend her thither; she begins to be afraid, that she shall not go this night; and, in grief and despair, has flung herself into her old apartment; lock'd herself in; and, thro' the key-hole, Dorcas sees her on her knees—praying, I suppose, for a safe deliverance.

And from what?—And wherefore these agonizing apprehensions?

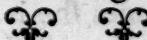
Why, here, this unkind Lady Betty, with the dear

dear creature's knowlege, tho' to her concern, and this mad-headed cousin Montague *without* it, while she was employ'd in directing her package, have hurried away in the coach to their own lodgings—Only, indeed, to put up some night-cloaths, and so forth, in order to attend their sweet cousin to Hamstead; and, no less to my surprize than hers, are not yet returned.

I have sent to know the meaning of it.

In a great hurry of spirits, she would have had me gone myself. Hardly any pacifying her!—The girl! God bless her! is wild with her own idle apprehensions!—What is she afraid of?

I curse them both for their delay—My tardy villain, how he stays!—Devil fetch them! Let them send their coach, and we'll go without them. In her hearing, I bid the fellow tell them so.—Perhaps he stays to bring the coach, if any thing happens to hinder the ladies from attending my Beloved this night.



DEVIL take them, again say I!—They *promised* too, they would not stay, because it was but two nights ago, that a chariot was robb'd at the foot of Hamstead hill; which alarmed my fair-one, when told of it!

Oh! here's my aunt's servant, with a billet.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Monday Night.

Excuse us, dear nephew, I beseech you, to my dearest kinswoman. One night cannot break squares. For here Miss Montague has been taken violently ill with three fainting fits, one after another. The hurry of her joy, I believe, to find your dear lady so much surpass all expectation (Never did family-love, you know, reign so strong, as among us), and the too eager desire she had to attend her, have occa-

occasioned it: For she has but weak spirits, poor girl! well as she looks.

If she be better, we will certainly go with you to-morrow morning, after we have breakfasted with her, at your lodgings. But, whether she be, or not, I will do myself the pleasure to attend your lady to Hamstead; and will be with you, for that purpose, about nine in the morning. With due compliments to your most worthily beloved, I am

Yours affectionately,

ELIZAB. LAWRENCE.

Faith and troth, Jack, I know not what to do with myself: For here, just now, having sent in the above note by Dorcas, out came my beloved with it in her hand: In a fit of phrensy!—True, by my soul!

She had indeed complained of her head all the evening.

Dorcas ran to me, out of breath, to tell me, that her lady was coming in some strange way: But she followed her so quick, that the frightened wench had not time to say in what way.

It seems, when she read the billet—Now indeed, said she, am I a lost creature! O the poor Clarissa Harlowe!

She tore off her head-cloaths; inquired where I was: And in she came, her shining tresses flowing about her neck; her ruffles torn, and hanging in tatters about her snowy hands; with her arms spread out; her eyes wildly turned, as if starting from their orbits—Down sunk she at my feet, as soon as she approached me; her charming bosom heaving to her uplifted face; and, clasping her arms about my knees, Dear Lovelace, said she, if ever—if ever—if ever—And, unable to speak another word, quitting her clasping hold, down prostrate on the floor sunk she, neither in a fit nor out of one.

I was quite astonished.—All my purposes suspended for a few moments, I knew neither what to say, nor what to do. But, recollecting myself, Am I *again*, thought I, in a way to be overcome, and made a fool of!—If I now recede, I am gone for ever.

I raised her: But down she sunk, as if quite disjointed; her limbs failing her—yet not in a fit neither. I never heard of, or saw, such a dear unaccountable: Almost lifeless, and speechless too for a few moments!—What must her apprehensions be at that moment! And for what? — An high-notioned dear soul!—Pretty ignorance! thought I.

Never having met with a repugnance so *greatly* repugnant, I was stagger'd—I was confounded—Yet how should I know that it would be so till I try'd?—And how, having proceeded thus far, could I stop, were I *not* to have had the women to goad me on, and to make light of circumstances, which they pretended to be better judges of than me.

I lifted her, however, into a chair; and, in words of disordered passion, told her, All her fears were needless: Wondered at them: Begg'd of her to be pacified: Besought her reliance on my faith and honour: And re-vowed all my old vows, and poured forth new ones.

At last, with an heart-breaking sob, I see, I see, Mr. Lovelace, in broken sentences she spoke—I see, I see—that at last—at last—I am ruined!—Ruined—If *your* pity—Let me implore your pity!—And down on her bosom, like a half-broken-stalk'd lily, top-heavy with the overcharging dews of the morning, sunk her head, with a sigh that went to my heart.

All I could think of to re-assure her, when a little recovered, I said.

Why did I not send for their coach, as I had intimated? It might return in the morning for the ladies.

I had actually done so, I told her, on seeing her

strange uneasiness. But it was then gone to fetch a doctor for Miss Montague, lest his chariot should not be so ready.

Ah! Lovelace! said she, with a doubting face; anguish in her imploring eye.

Lady Betty would think it very strange, I told her, if she were to know it was so disagreeable to her to stay one night, for her company, in a house where she had passed *so many!*

She called me names upon this.—She had called me names before.—I was patient.

Let her go to Lady Betty's lodgings, then; *directly* go; if the person I called Lady Betty was really Lady Betty.

IF! my dear! Good Heavens! What a villain does that IF shew you believe me to be!

I cannot help it—I beseech you once more, Let me go to Mrs. Leeson's, if *that IF* ought not to be said.

Then assuming a more resolute spirit—I will go! I will inquire my way!—I will go by myself!—And would have rushed by me.

I folded my arms about her to detain her; pleading the bad way I heard poor Charlotte was in; and what a farther concern her impatience, if she went, would give her.

She would believe nothing I said, unless I would instantly order a coach (since she was not to have Lady Betty's, nor was permitted to go to Mrs. Leeson's), and let her go in it to Hamstead, late as it was; and all alone; so much the better: For in the house of *people*, of whom Lady Betty, upon inquiry, had heard a bad character [*Dropt foolishly This, by my prating new relation, in order to do credit to herself, by depreciating others*]; every thing, and every face, looking with so much meaning vileness, as well as my own [*Thou art still too sensible, thought I, my charmer!*],

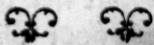
charmer!], she was resolved not to stay another night.

Dreading what might happen as to her intellects, and being very apprehensive, that she might possibly go thro' a great deal before morning (tho' more violent she could not well be with the worst she dreaded), I humoured her, and ordered Will. to go and endeavour to get a coach directly, to carry us to Hamstead ; I cared not at what price.

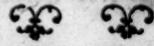
Robbers, whom I would have terrify'd her with, she feared not—I was all her fear, I found ; and this house her terror : For I saw plainly, that she now believed, that Lady Betty and Miss Montague were both impostors.

But her mistrust is a little of the latest to do her service.

And, O Jack, the rage of Love, the rage of Revenge is upon me ! By turns they tear me !—The progress already made ! — The womens instigations ! — The power I shall have to try her to the utmost, and still to marry her, if she be not to be brought to co-habitation ! — Let me perish, Belford, if she escape me now !



WILL. is not yet come back.—Near eleven.—



WILL. is this moment returned.—No coach to be got, *for love or money*.

Once more, she urges—To Mrs. Leeson's let me go ! — Lovelace ! Good Lovelace ! Let me go to Mrs. Leeson's ! — What is Miss Montague's illness to my terror ? — For the Almighty's sake, Mr. Lovelace ! — her hands clasped—

O my angel ! What a wildness is this ! — Do you know, do you see, my dearest life, what an appearance your causeless apprehensions have given you ? — Do you know it is past eleven o'clock ?

Twelve, one, two, three, four—any hour—I care

care not—if you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated house!

Thou'l observe, Belford, that tho' this was written afterwards, yet (as in other places) I write it as it was spoken, and happened; as if I had retired to put down every sentence as spoken. I know thou likest this lively *present-tense* manner, as it is one of my peculiars.

Just as she had repeated the last words, *If you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated house*, in came Mrs. Sinclair, in a great ferment.—And what, pray, Madam, has *this house* done to you?—Mr. Lovelace, you have known me some time; and, if I have not the niceness of this lady, I hope I do not deserve to be treated thus!

She set her huge arms a-kembo: *Hoh! Madam, let me tell you, I am amazed at your freedoms with my character!* And, Mr. Lovelace (holding up, and violently shaking, her head), if you are a gentleman, and a man of honour—

Having never before seen any thing but obsequiousness in this woman, little as she liked her, she was frightened at her masculine air, and fierce look—God help me! cry'd she. What will become of me now! Then, turning her head hither and thither, in a wild kind of amaze, Whom have I for a protector! What will become of me now!

I will be your protector, my dearest love!—But indeed you are uncharitably severe upon poor Mrs. Sinclair! Indeed you are!—She is a gentlewoman born, and the relict of a man of honour; and tho' left in such circumstances as oblige her to let lodgings, yet would she scorn to be guilty of a wilful baseness.

I hope so—it may be so—I may be mistaken—But—But there is no crime, I presume, no treason, to say I don't like her house.

The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms

kembo'd again—Her eye-brows erect, like the bristles upon a hog's back, and, scouling over her shortened nose, more than half-hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was distorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips, as if to bellows up wind and sputter into her horse-nostrils ; and her chin was curdled, and more than usually prominent with passion.

With two *Hob-Madams* she accosted the frightened fair-one ; who, terrified, caught hold of my sleeve.

I feared she would fall into fits ; and, with a look of indignation, told Mrs. Sinclair, that these apartments were mine ; and I could not imagine what she meant, either by listening to what passed between me and my spouse, or to come in, uninvited ; much less to give herself these violent airs.

I may be to blame, Jack, for suffering this wretch to give herself these airs : but her coming in was without my orders.

The old Beldam, throwing herself into a chair, fell a blubbering and exclaiming. And the pacifying of her, and endeavouring to reconcile the lady to her, took up till near one a clock.

And thus, between terror, and the late hour, and what followed, she was diverted from the thoughts of getting out of the house to Mrs. Leeson's, or anywhere else.

LETTER XXVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday Morn. June 13.

AND now, Belford, I can go no farther. The affair is over. Clarissa lives. And I am
Your humble servant,

R. LOVELACE.

The whole of this black transaction is given by the injured lady, to Miss Howe, in her subsequent letters, dated Thursday July 6. To which the reader is referred.

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq.

Watford, Wedn. June 14.

O Thou savage-hearted monster! What work hast thou made in *one guilty hour*, for a *whole age* of repentance!

I am inexpressibly concerned at the fate of this matchless lady! She could not have fallen into the hands of any other man breathing, and suffered as she has done with thee.

I had written a great part of another long letter, to try to soften thy flinty heart in her favour; for I thought it but too likely, that thou shouldest succeed in getting her back again to the accursed woman's. But I find it would have been too late, had I finished it, and sent it away. Yet cannot I forbear writing, to urge thee to make the *only* amends thou now canst make her, by a proper use of the License thou hast obtained.

Poor, poor lady! It is a pain to me, that I ever saw her. Such an adorer of virtue to be sacrificed to the vilest of her sex; and thou their implement in the devil's hands, for a purpose so base, so ungenerous, so inhumane! — Pride thyself, O cruellest of men, in this reflection; and that thy triumph over a lady, who for thy sake was abandoned of every friend she had in the world, was effected, not by advantages taken of her weakness and credulity; but by the blackest artifice; after a long course of studied deceits had been tried to no purpose.

I can tell thee, it is well either for thee or for me, that I am not the brother of the lady. Had I been her brother, her violation must have been followed by the blood of one of us.

Excuse me, Lovelace; and let not the lady fare the worse for my concern for her. And yet I have

but one other motive to ask thy excuse ; and that is, because I owe to thy own communicative pen the knowlege I have of thy barbarous villainy ; since thou might'st, if thou would'st, have passed it upon me for a common seduction.

CLARISSA LIVES, thou say'ft. That she does, is my wonder ; and these words shew, that thou thyself (tho' thou couldst, nevertheless, proceed) hardly expectedst she would have survived the outrage. What must have been the poor lady's distress (watchful as she had been over her honour), when dreadful certainty took place of cruel apprehension !—And yet a man may guess what it must have been, by that which thou paintest, when she suspected herself trick'd, deserted, and betrayed, by thy pretended aunt and cousin.

That thou couldst behold her phrensy on this occasion, and her half-speechless, half-fainting prostration at thy feet, and yet retain thy evil purposes, will hardly be thought credible, even by those who know thee, if they have seen her.

Poor, poor Lady ! With such noble qualities as would have adorned the most exalted married life, to fall into the hands of the *only* man in the world, who could have treated her as thou hast treated her !—And to let loose the old dragon, as thou properly callest her, upon the before-affrighted innocent, what a barbarity was *that* ! What a poor piece of barbarity ! in order to obtain by terror, what thou despairedst to do by love, tho' supported by stratagems the most infidious !

O LOVELACE ! LOVELACE ! had I doubted it before, I should now be convinced, that there must be a WORLD AFTER THIS, to do justice to injured merit, and to punish such a barbarous perfidy ! Could the divine Socrates, and the divine CLARISSA, otherwise have suffered ?

But let me, if possible, for one moment, try to forget

forget this villainous outrage on the most excellent of women.

I have business here, which will hold me yet a few days; and then perhaps I shall quit this house for ever.

I have had a solemn and tedious time of it. I should never have known, that I had half the respect I really find I had for the old gentleman, had I not so closely, at his earnest desire, attended him, and been a witness of the tortures he underwent.

This melancholy occasion may possibly have contributed to humanize me: But surely I never could have been so remorseless a caitiff as *thou* hast been, to a woman of *half* this lady's excellence.

But pr'ythee, dear Lovelace, if thou'rt a man, and not a devil, resolve, out of hand, to repair thy sin of ingratitude, by conferring upon thyself the highest honour thou *canst* receive, in making her lawfully thine.

But if thou canst not prevail upon thyself to do her this justice, I think I should not scruple a tilt with thee (An everlasting rupture at least must follow), if thou sacrificest her to the accursed women.

Thou art desirous to know what advantage I reap by my uncle's demise. I do not certainly know; for I have not been so greedily solicitous on this subject, as some of the kindred have been, who ought to have shewn more decency, as I have told them, and suffered the corpse to have been cold before they had begun their hungry inquiries. But, by what I gathered from the poor man's talk to me, who, oftener than I wished, touched upon the subject, I deem it will be upwards of 5000*l.* in cash, and in the funds, after all legacies paid, besides the real estate, which is a clear 500*l.* a year.

I wish from my heart, thou wert a money-lover! Were the estate to be of double the value, thou shouldst have it every shilling; only upon one con-

dition (for my circumstances before were as easy as I wish them to be while I am single)—That thou wouldest permit me the honour of being this fatherless lady's *Father*, as it is called, at the altar.

Think of this, my dear Lovelace: Be honest; And let me present thee with the brightest jewel that man ever possessed; and then, body and soul, wilt thou bind to thee for ever, thy

BELFORD.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Thursday, June 15.

LE T me alone, you great dog, you!—Let me alone!—have I heard a lesser boy, his coward arms held over his head and face, say to a bigger, who was pummeling him, for having run away with his apple, his orange, or his ginger-bread.

So say I to thee, on occasion of thy severity to thy poor friend, who, as thou ownest, has furnished thee (ungenerous as thou art!) with the weapons thou brandishest so fearfully against him.—And to what purpose, when the mischief is done; when, of consequence, the affair is irretrievable? and when a CLARISSA could not move me?

Well, but, after all, I must own, that there is something very singular in this lady's case: And, at times, I cannot help regretting, that I ever attempted her; since not one power either of body or soul could be moved in my favour; and since, to use the expression of the philosopher, on a much graver occasion, There is no difference to be found between the skull of king Philip, and that of another man.

But peoples extravagant notions of things alter not facts, Belford: And, when all's done, Miss Clarissa Harlowe has but run the fate of a thousand others of her Sex—Only that they did not set such a romantic

tic value upon what they call their honour; that's all.

And yet I will allow thee this—That if a person sets a high value upon any thing, be it ever such a trifle in itself, or in the eye of others, the robbing of that person of it is *not* a trifle to *him*. Take the matter in this light, I own I have done wrong, great wrong, to this admirable creature.

But have I not known twenty and twenty of the sex, who have seemed to carry their notions of virtue high; yet, when brought to the test, have abated of their severity? And how should we be convinced that *any* of them are proof, till they are try'd?

A thousand times have I said, that I never yet met with such a woman as this. If I *had*, I hardly ever should have attempted Miss Clarissa Harlowe. Hitherto she is all angel: And was not that the point which at setting out I proposed to try (*a*)? And was not *cohabitation* ever my darling view? And am I not now, at last, in the high-road to it?—It is true, that I have nothing to boast of as to her will. The very contrary. But now are we come to the test, whether she cannot be brought to make the best of an irreparable evil?—If she exclaim (she has reason to exclaim, and I will sit down with patience, by the hour together, to hear her exclamations, till she is tired of them), she will then descend to expostulation perhaps: Expostulation will give me hope: Expostulation will shew, that she hates me not. And if she hate me not, she will forgive: And if she *now* forgive; then will all be over; and she will be mine upon my own terms: And it shall then be the whole study of my future life to make her happy.

So, Belford, thou seeft; that I have journeyed on to this stage (indeed, thro' infinite mazes, and as infinite remorses), with one determined point in view, from the first. To thy urgent supplication then, that

I will do her grateful justice by marriage, let me answer in Matt. Prior's two lines on his hoped-for Auditorship; as put into the mouths of his St. John and Harley;

—Let that be done, which Matt. doth say.

YEA, quoth the Earl—BUT NOT TO-DAY.

Thou seeſt, Jack, that I make no resolutions, however, againſt doing her, one time or other, the wiſh'd-for justice, even were I to ſucceſs in my principal view, cohabitation. And of this I do affuſe thee, that, if I ever marry, it muſt, it ſhall, be Miſſ Clarissa Harlowe.—Nor is her honour at all impaired with me, by what ſhe has ſo far ſuffered: But the contrary. She muſt only take care, that, if ſhe be at laſt brought to forgive me, ſhe ſhew me, that her Lovelace is the only man on earth, whom ſhe could have forgiuen on the like occaſion.

But, ah, Jack! what, in the mean time, ſhall I do with this admirable creature? At preſent—I am loth to ſay it—But, at preſent, ſhe is quite stupeſied.

I had rather, methinks, ſhe ſhould have retained all her active powers, tho' I had ſuffered by her nails and her teeth, than that ſhe ſhould be funk into ſuch a ſtate of absolute—infenſibility (ſhall I call it), as ſhe has been in ever ſince Tuesday morning. Yet, as ſhe begins a little to revive, and now-and-then to call names, and to exclaim, I dread almost to en-gage with the anguſh of a ſpirit that owes its extra-ordinary agita-tions to a nice-ness that has no example either in antient or modern ſtory. For, after all, what is there in her caſe, that ſhould stupefy ſuch a glowing, ſuch a blooming charmer?—Excess of grief, excess of terror, has made a perfon's hair ſtand on end, and even (as we have read) changed the colour of it. But that it ſhould ſo stupefy, as to make a perfon, at times, infenſible to thoſe imaginary wrongs, which would raise others from stupefaction, is very ſurpriſing!

But

But I will leave this subject, lest it should make me too grave.

I was yesterday at Hamstead, and discharged all obligations there, with no small applause. I told them, that the lady was now as happy as myself: And that is no great untruth; for I am not altogether so, when I allow myself to *think*.

Mrs. Townsend, with her tars, had not been then there. I told them what I would have them say to her, if she come.

Well, but, after all (How many *after-all's* have I?), I could be very grave, were I to give way to it.—The devil take me for a fool! What's the matter with me, I wonder!—I must breathe a fresher air for a few days.

But what shall I do with this admirable creature the while?—Hang me, if I know!—For, if I stir, the venomous spider of this habitation will want to set upon the charming fly, whose silken wings are already so intangled in my enormous web, that she cannot move hand or foot: For so much has grief stupefied her, that she is at present as destitute of will, as she always seemed of desire. I must not therefore think of leaving her yet for two days together.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

I Have just now had a specimen of what this dear creature's resentment will be, when quite recover'd: An affecting one!—For, entering her apartment after Dorcas; and endeavouring to soothe and pacify her disordered mind; in the midst of my blandishments, she held up to Heaven, in a speechless agony, the innocent Licence (which she has in her own power); as the poor distressed Catalans held up their

English

English treaty, on an occasion that keeps the worst of my actions in countenance.

She seemed about to call down vengeance upon me ; when, happily, the Leaden God, in pity to her trembling Lovelace, waved over her half-drowned eyes his somniferous wand, and laid asleep the fair exclamer, before she could go half thro' with her intended imprecation.

Thou wilt gues, by what I have written, that some *little* art has been made use of : But it was with a *generous* design (if thou'l allow me the word on such an occasion) in order to lessen the too quick sense she was likely to have of what she was to suffer. A contrivance I never had occasion for before, and had not thought of now, if Mrs. Sinclair had not proposed it to me : To whom I left the management of it : And I have done nothing but curse her ever since, lest the quantity should have for ever damped her charming intellects.

Hence my concern—For I think the poor lady ought not to have been so treated. *Poor lady*, did I say?—What have I to do with thy creeping style?—But have not I the worst of it ; since her insensibility has made me but a thief to my own joys?

I did not intend to tell thee of this little *innocent* trick ; for such I designed it to be ; but that I hate disingenuity : To thee, especially : And as I cannot help writing in a more serious vein than usual, thou wouldest, perhaps, had I not hinted the true cause, have imagined, that I was sorry for the fact itself : And this would have given *thee* a good deal of trouble in scribbling dull persuasives to repair by matrimony ; and *me*, in reading thy crude nonsense. Besides, one day or other, thou mightest, had I not confessed it, have heard of it in an aggravated manner ; and I know thou hast such an high opinion of this lady's virtue, that thou wouldest be disappointed, if thou hadst reason to think, that she was subdued by
her

her own consent, or any the least yielding in her will. And so is she beholden to me, in some measure, that, at the expence of my honour, she may so justly form a plea, which will intirely salve hers?

And now is the whole secret out.

Thou wilt say I am a horrid fellow!—As the lady does, that I am the *unchained Beelzebub*, and a *plotting villain*: And as this is what you both said beforehand, and nothing worse can be said, I desire, if thou wouldest not have me quite serious with thee, and that I should think thou meanest more by thy tilting-hint, than I am willing to believe thou doft, that thou wilt forbear thy invectives: For is not the thing done?—Can it be help'd?—And must I not now try to make the best of it?—And the rather do I injoin thee this, and inviolable secrecy; because I begin to think, that my punishment will be greater than the fault, were it to be only from my own reflection.

LETTER XXX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

Friday, June 16.

I AM sorry to hear of thy misfortune; but hope thou wilt not long lie by it. Thy servant tells me, what a narrow escape thou hadst with thy neck. I wish it may not be ominous: But I think thou seemest not to be in so enterprising a way as formerly; and yet, merry or sad, thou seest a rake's neck is always in danger, if not from the hangman, from his own horse. But 'tis a vicious toad, it seems; and I think thou shouldest never venture upon his back again; for 'tis a plaguy thing for rider and horse both to be vicious.

Thy fellow tells me, thou desirest me to continue to write to thee, to divert thy chagrin on thy forced confine-

confinement : But how I can think it in my power to divert, when my subject is not pleasing to myself ?

Cæsar never knew what it was to be *hyp'd*, I will call it, till he came to be what Pompey was ; that is to say, till he arrived at the height of his ambition : Nor did thy Lovelace know what it was to be gloomy, till he had completed his wishes upon the charming creature in the world, as the other did his upon the most potent republic that ever existed.

And yet why say I, *completed* ? when the *will*, the *consent*, is wanting—And I have still views before me of obtaining that ?

Yet I could almost join with thee in the wish, which thou sendest me up by thy servant, unfriendly as it is, that I had had thy misfortune before Monday night last : For here, the poor lady has run into a contrary extreme to that I told thee of in my last : For now is she as much too lively, as before she was too stupid ; and, 'bating that she has pretty frequent lucid intervals, would be deem'd raving mad, and I should be obliged to confine her.

I am most confoundedly disturb'd about it : For I begin to fear, that her intellects are irreparably hurt.

Who the devil could have expected such strange effects from a cause so common, and so slight ?

But these high-soul'd and high-sens'd girls, who had set up for shining lights and examples to the rest of the sex, [I now see, that such there are !] are with such difficulty brought down to the common standard, that a wise man, who prefers his peace of mind to his glory in subduing one of that exalted class, would have nothing to say to them.

I do all in my power to quiet her spirits, when I force myself into her presence.

I go on, begging pardon one minute ; and vowed truth and honour another.

I would at first have persuaded her, and offer'd to call

call witness to the truth of it, that we were actually married. Tho' the licence was in her hands, I thought the assertion might go down in her disorder; and charming consequences I hoped would follow. But this would not do.—

I therefore gave up that hope: And now I declare to her, that it is my resolution to marry her, the moment her uncle Harlowe informs me, that he will grace the ceremony with his presence.

But she believes nothing I say; nor (whether in her senses, or not) bears me with patience in her sight.

I pity her with all my soul; and I curse myself, when she is in her wailing fits, and when I apprehend, that intellects, so charming as hers, are for ever damp'd—But more I curse these women, who put me upon such an expedient!—Lord! Lord! what a hand have I made of it!—And all for what?

Last night, for the first time since Monday last, she got to her pen and ink: But she pursues her writing with such eagerness and hurry, as shew too evidently her discomposure.

I hope, however, that this employment will help to calm her spirits.



JUST now Dorcas tells me, that what she writes she tears, and throws the paper in fragments under the table, either as not knowing what she does, or disliking it: Then gets up, wrings her hands, weeps, and shifts her seat all round the room: Then returns to her table, sits down, and writes again.



ONE odd letter, as I may call it, Dorcas has this moment given me from her—*Carry this*, said she, *to the vilest of men*. Dorcas, a toad! brought it, without any further direction, to me.—I sat down, intend-

intending (tho' 'tis pretty long) to give thee a copy of it : But, for my life, I cannot ; 'tis so extravagant. And the original is too much an original to let it go out of my hands.

But some of the scraps and fragments, as either torn thro', or flung aside, I will copy, for the novelty of the thing, and to shew thee how her mind works, now she is in this whimsical way. Yet I know I am still furnishing thee with new weapons against myself. But spare thy comments. My own reflections render them needless. Dorcas thinks her lady will ask for them : So wishes to have them to lay again under her table.

By the first thou'l guess, that I have told her, that Miss Howe is very ill, and can't write ; that she may account the better for not having received the letter designed for her.

PAPER I.

(Torn in two pieces.)

My dearest Miss Howe !

O ! What dreadful, dreadful things have I to tell you ! But yet I cannot tell you neither. But say, Are you really ill, as a vile, vile creature informs me you are ?

But he never yet told me truth, and I hope has not in this : And yet, if it were not true, surely I should have heard from you before now !—But what have I to do, to upbraid ?—You may well be tired of me !—And if you are, I can forgive you ; for I am tired of myself : And all my own relations were tired of me long before you were.

How good you have always been to me, mine own dear Anna Howe !—But how I ramble !

I sat down to say a great deal—My heart was full—I did not know what to say first—And thought, and grief, and confusion, and (O my poor head !) I cannot tell what—And thought, and grief, and confusion, came crowding so thick upon me ; one would be first, another would be first, all would be first ; so I can write nothing

at

at all.—Only that, whatever they have done to me, I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was in any one thing.—In any one thing did I say? Yes, but I am; for I am still, and I ever will be,

Your true—

Plague on it! I can write no more of this eloquent nonsense myself; which rather shews a raised, than a quenched, imagination: But Dorcas shall transcribe the others in separate papers, as written by the whimsical charmer: And some time hence, when all is over, and I can better bear to read them, I may ask thee for a sight of them. Preserve them therefore; for we often look back with pleasure even upon the heaviest griefs, when the cause of them is removed.

PAPER II.

(*Scratch'd thro', and thrown under the Table.*)

—AND can you, my dear honoured papa, resolve for ever to reprobate your poor child? — But I am sure you would not, if you knew what she has suffered since her unhappy—And will nobody plead for your poor suffering girl? — No one good body? — Why, then, dearest Sir, let it be an act of your own innate goodness, which I have so much experienced, and so much abused.—I don't presume to think you should receive me—No, indeed—my name is—I don't know what my name is! — I never dare to wish to come into your family again! — But your heavy curse, my papa—Yes, I *will* call you papa, and help yourself as you can—for you are my own dear papa, whether you will or not—And tho' I am an unworthy child—yet I *am* your child—

PAPER III.

A Lady took a great fancy to a young Lion, or a Bear, I forget which—but a Bear, or a Tyger, I believe, it was. It was made her a present of, when a whelp. She fed it with her own hand: She nursed up the wicked cub with great tenderness; and would play with it, without fear or apprehension of danger: And it was obedi-

ent

ent to all her commands : And its tameness, as she used to boast, increased with its growth ; so that, like a lap-dog, it would follow her all over the house. But mind what followed : At last, some-how, neglecting to satisfy its hungry maw, or having other-wise disengaged it on some occasion, it resumed its nature ; and on a sudden fell upon her, and tore her in pieces.—And who was most to blame, I pray ? The brute, or the lady ? The lady, surely !—For what *she* did, was *out of* nature, *out of* character, at least : What *it* did, was *in* its own nature.

PAPER IV.

HOW art thou now humbled in the dust, thou proud Clarissa Harlowe ! Thou that never steppedst out of thy father's house, but to be admired ! Who-wert wont to turn thine eye, sparkling with healthful life, and self-assurance, to different objects at once, as thou passedst, as if (for so thy penetrating sister used to say) to plume thyself upon the expected applauses of all that beheld thee ! Thou that usedst to go to rest satisfied with the adulations paid thee in the past day, and couldst put off every thing but thy vanity !—

PAPER V.

Rejoice not now, my Bella, my sister, my friend ; but pity the humbled creature, whose foolish heart you used to say you beheld thro' the thin veil of humility, which cover'd it.

It must have been so ! My fall had not else been permitted—

You penetrated my proud heart with the jealousy of an elder sister's searching eye.

You knew me better than I knew myself.

Hence your upbraidings, and your chidings, when I began to totter.

But forgive now those vain triumphs of my heart.

I thought, poor proud wretch that I was, that what you said was owing to your envy.

I thought I could acquit my intention of any such vanity.

I was too secure in the knowlege I thought I had of my own heart.

My supposed advantages became a snare to me.
And what now is the end of all?—

PAPER VI.

WHAT now is become of the prospects of a happy life, which once I thought opening before me?—Who now shall assist in the solemn preparations? Who now shall provide the nuptial ornaments, which soften and divert the apprehensions of the fearful virgin? No court now to be paid to my smiles! No encouraging compliments to inspire thee with hope of laying a mind not unworthy of thee under obligation! No elevation now for conscious merit, and applauded purity, to look down from on a prostrate adorer, and an admiring world, and up to pleased and rejoicing parents and relations!

PAPER VII.

THOU pernicious caterpillar, that preyest upon the fair leaf of virgin fame, and poisonest those leaves which thou canst not devour!

Thou fell blight, thou eastern blast, thou overspreading mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year! that mockest the laborious toil, and blastest the joyful hopes, of the painful husbandman!

Thou fretting moth, that corruptest the fairest garment!
Thou eating canker-worm, that preyest upon the opening bud, and turnest the damask rose into livid yellowness!

If, as Religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil actions to one another—O wretch! bethink thee, in time bethink thee, how great must be thy condemnation!

PAPER VIII.

AT first, I saw something in your air and person that displeased me not. Your birth and fortunes were no small advantages to you.—You acted not ignobly by my

my passionate brother. Every-body said you were brave : Every-body said you were generous. A *brave* man, I thought, could not be a *base* man : A *generous* man, could not, I believed, be *ungenerous*, where he acknowledged *obligation*. Thus prepossessed, all the rest, that my soul loved, and wished for, in your reformation, I hoped !—I knew not, but by report, any flagrant instances of your vileness. You seemed frank, as well as generous : Frankness and generosity ever attracted me : Whoever kept up those appearances, I judged of their hearts by my own ; and whatever qualities *I wished* to find in them, I was *ready* to find ; and, *when* found, I believed them to be natives of the soil.

My Fortunes, my Rank, my Character, I thought a further security. I was in none of those respects unworthy of being the niece of Lord M. and of his two noble sisters.—Your vows, your imprecations—But, Oh ! you have barbarously and basely conspired against that honour, which you ought to have protected : And now you have made me—What is it of vile, that you have *not* made me ?—

Yet, God knows my heart, I had no culpable inclinations !—I honoured virtue !—I hated vice !—But I knew not, that you were vice itself !

PAPER IX.

HADE the happiness of any the poorest outcast in the world, whom I had never seen, never known, never before heard of, lain as much in *my* power, as my happiness did in *yours*, my benevolent heart would have made me fly to the succour of such a poor distressed.—With what pleasure would I have raised the dejected head, and comforted the desponding heart !—But who now shal pity the poor wretch, who has increased, instead of diminished, the number of the miserable !

PAPER X.

LEAD me, where my own Thoughts themselves may lose me,
Where I may doze out what I've left of Life,
Forget myself; and that day's guilt! —
Cruel remembrance! — how shall I appease thee?

— Oh! you have done an act
That blots the face and blush of modesty;
Takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And makes a blister there! —

Then down I laid my head,
Down on cold earth, and for a while was dead;
And my freed Soul to a strange somewhere fled!
Ah! sottish soul! said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly,
Fool! to resume her broken chain,
And row the galley here again!
Fool! to that body to return,
Where it condemn'd and destin'd is to mourn.

O my Miss Howe! if thou hast friendship, help me,
And speak the words of peace to my divided soul,
That wars within me,
And raises ev'ry sense to my confusion.
I'm tott'ring on the brink
Of peace; and thou art all the hold I've left!
Assist me in the pangs of my affliction!

When honour's lost, 'tis a relief to die:
Death's but a sure retreat from infamy.

Then farewell, youth,
And all the joys that dwell
With youth and life!
And life itself, farewell!

For life can never be sincerely blest.
Heaven punishes the *Bad*, and proves the *Best*.

AFTER all, Belford, I have just skimm'd over these transcriptions of Dorcas; and I see there is method and

Death only can be dreadful to the bad:
To innocence 'tis like a bugbear dressed
To frighten children. Pull but off the mask
And he'll appear a friend.

I could a tale unfold
Would harrow up thy soul!

By swift misfortunes
How am I purſu'd!
Which on each other are,
Like waves, renew'd!

and good sense in some of them, wild as others of them are ; and that her memory, which serves her so well for these poetical flights, is far from being impair'd. And this gives me hope, that she will soon recover her charming intellects—Tho' I shall be the sufferer by their restoration, I make no doubt.

But, in the letter she wrote to me, there are yet greater extravagancies ; and tho' I said, It was too affecting to give thee a copy of it, yet, after I have let thee see the loose papers inclosed, I think I may throw in a transcription of that. Dorcas, therefore, shall here transcribe it : I cannot. The reading of it affected me ten times more, than the severest reproaches of a regular mind.

To Mr. LOVELACE.

I Never intended to write another line to you. I would not see you, If I could help it. O that I never had !

But tell me of a truth, Is Miss Howe really and truly ill ?—Very ill ?—And is not her illness poison ? And don't *you* know who gave it her ?

What you, or Mrs. Sinclair, or somebody, I cannot tell who, have done to my poor head, you best know : But I shall never be what I was. My head is gone. I have wept away all my brain, I believe ; for I can weep no more. Indeed I have had my full share ; so it is no matter.

But, good now, Lovelace, don't set Mrs. Sinclair upon me again ! I never did her any Harm. She *so* affrights me, when I see her !—Ever since—When was it ? I cannot tell. *You* can, I suppose. She may be a good woman, as far as I know. She was the wife of a man of honour—Very likely !—Tho' forced to let lodgings for her livelihood. Poor gentlewoman ! Let her know I pity her : But don't let her come near me again—Pray don't !

Yet she may be a very good woman—

What would I say ! — I forget what I was going to say.

O Lovelace, you are Satan himself; or he helps you out in every thing; and that's as bad!

But have you really and truly sold yourself to him? And for how long? What duration is your reign to have?

Poor man! The contract *will* be out; and then what will be your fate!

Oh! Lovelace! if you could be sorry for yourself, I would be sorry too—But when all my doors are fast, and nothing but the key-hole open, and the key of late put into that, to be where you are, in a manner without opening any of them—O wretched, wretched Clarissa Harlowe!

For I never will be Lovelace—let my uncle take it as he pleases.

Well, but now I remember what I was going to say—It is for *your* good—not *mine*—For nothing can do me good now!—O thou villainous man! thou hated Lovelace!

But Mrs. Sinclair may be a good woman—if you love me—but that you don't—but don't let her bluster up with her worse than mannish airs to me again!—O she is a frightful woman! If she *be* a woman!—She needed not to put on that *fearful mask* to scare me out of my poor wits. But don't tell her what I say—I have no hatred to her—it is only fright, and foolish fear, that's all.—She may not *be* a bad woman—but neither are all *men*, any more than all *women*, alike—God forbid they should be like you!

Alas! you have killed my head among you—I don't say who did it—God forgive you all!—But had it not been better to have put me out of all your ways at once? You might safely have done it! For nobody would require me at your hands—No, not a soul—Except, indeed, Miss Howe would have said, when she should see you, What, Lovelace, have you done with Clarissa Harlowe?—And then you could have given any slight gay answer—Sent her beyond sea; or, she has run away from me, as she did from her parents. And this would have been easily credited; for you know, Lovelace, she that could run away from *them*, might very well run away from *you*.

But this is nothing to what I wanted to say. Now I have it!

I have lost it again—This foolish wench comes teasing me—For what purpose should I eat? For what end should I wish to live?—I tell thee, Dorcas, I will neither eat nor drink. I cannot be worse than I am.

I will do as you'd have me—Good Dorcas, look not upon me so fiercely—But thou canst not look so bad as I have seen somebody look.

Mr. Lovelace, now that I remember what I took pen in hand to say, let me hurry off my thoughts, lest I lose them again.—Here I am sensible—And yet I am hardly sensible neither—But I know my head is not as it should be, for all that—Therefore let me propose one thing to you: It is for *your* good—not *mine*: And this is it:

I must needs be both a trouble, and an expence, to you. And here my uncle Harlowe, when he knows how I am, will never wish any man to have me: No, not even *you*, who have been the occasion of it—Barbarous and ungrateful!—A less complicated villainy cost a Tarquin—But I forget what I would say again—

Then this is it: I never shall be myself again: I have been a very wicked creature—a vain, proud, poor creature—full of secret pride—which I carried off under an humble guise, and deceived every body—My sister says so—And now I am punished—so let me be carried out of this house, and out of your sight; and let me be put into that Bedlam privately, which once I saw: But it was a sad sight to me then! Little as I thought what I should come to *myself!*—That is all I would say: This is all I have to wish for—Then I shall be out of all your ways; and I shall be taken care of; and bread and water, without your tormentings, will be dainties; and my straw bed the easiest I have lain in—for—I cannot tell how long!—

My cloaths will sell for what will keep me there, perhaps, as long as I shall live. But, Lovelace, dear Lovelace I will call you; for you have cost me enough, I'm sure!—don't let me be made a shew of, for my family's sake; nay, for your *own* sake, don't do that—For when I know all I have suffer'd, which yet I do not, and no matter if I never do—I may be apt to rave against you by name, and tell of all your baseness to a poor humbled

humbed creature, that once was as proud as any-body—But of what I can't tell.—Except of my own folly and vanity—But let that pass—since I am punished enough for it—

So, suppose, instead of Bedlam, it were a private mad-house, where nobody comes!—That will be better a great deal.

But, another thing, Lovelace: Don't let them use me cruelly when I am there—*You* have used me cruelly enough, you know! Don't let them use me cruelly; for I will be very tractable; and do as any-body would have me do—Except what you would have me do—for that I never will.

—Another thing, Lovelace: Don't let this *good* woman; I was going to say *vile* woman; but don't tell her that, —Because she won't let you send me to this happy refuge perhaps, if she were to know it—

Another thing, Lovelace: And let me have pen, and ink, and paper, allowed me—It will be all my amusement—But they need not send to any-body I shall write to, what I write, because it will but trouble them: And somebody may do you a mischief, may-be.—I wish not that any-body do any-body a mischief upon my account.

You tell me, that Lady Betty Lawrance, and your cousin Montague, were here to take leave of me; but that I was asleep, and could not be waked. So you told me at first, I was married, you know; and that you were my husband—Ah! Lovelace! look to what you say—But let not them (for they will sport with my misery), let not *that* Lady Betty, let not *that* Miss Montague, whatever the *real* ones may do; nor Mrs. Sinclair neither, nor any of her lodgers, nor her nieces, come to see me in my place—*Real* ones, I say; for, Lovelace, I shall find out all your villainies in time—Indeed I shall—So put me there as soon as you can—It is for *your* good—Then all will pass for ravings that I can say, as, I doubt not, many poor creatures exclamations do pass, tho' there may be too much truth in them for all that—And you know *I began to be mad at Hamstead*—So you said.—Ah! villainous man! what have you not to answer for!

A little interval seems to be lent me. I had begun to look over what I have written. It is not fit for any one to see, so far as I have been able to re-peruse it: But my head will not hold, I doubt, to go through it all. If therefore I have not already mentioned my earnest desire, let me tell you, it is this: That I be sent out of this abominable house without delay, and lock'd up in some private madhouse about this town; for such, it seems, there are; never more to be seen, or to be produced to any-body, except in your own vindication, if you should be charged with the murder of my person; a much lighter crime, than that of my honour, which the greatest villain on earth has robbed me of. And deny me not this my last request, I beseech you; and one other, and that is, Never to let me see you more! This surely may be granted to

The miserably abused

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I WILL not hear thy heavy preachments upon this plaguy letter. So, not a word of that sort! The paper, thou'l see, is blister'd with the tears even of the harden'd transcriber; which has made her ink run here-and-there.

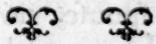
Mrs. Sinclair is a true heroine, and, I think, shames us all. And she is a *woman* too! Thou'l say, The best things corrupted become the worst. But this is certain, that whatever the sex set their hearts upon, they make thorough work of it. And hence it is, that a mischief, which would end in simple robbery among men-rogues, becomes murder, if a woman be in it.

I know thou wilt blame me for having had recourse to *art*. But do not physicians prescribe opiates in acute cases, where the violence of the disorder would be apt to throw the patient into a fever or delirium? I averr, that my motive for this expedient was *mercy*; nor could it be any thing else. For a Rape, thou knowest, to us Rakes, is far from being an undesirable thing. Nothing but the Law stands

stands in our way, upon that account ; and the opinion of what a modest woman will suffer, rather than become a *viva voce* accuser, lessens much an honest fellow's apprehensions on that score. Then, if these *somnivolences* [I hate the word *opiates* on this occasion] have turned her head, that is an effect they frequently have upon some constitutions ; and in this case was rather the fault of the dose, than the design of the giver.

But is not wine itself an opiate in degree ?—How many women have been taken advantage of by wine, and other still more intoxicating viands ?—Let me tell thee, Jack, that the *experience* of many of the *passive* sex, and the *consciences* of many more of the *active*, appealed to, will testify that thy Lovelace is not the worst of villains. Nor would I have thee put me upon clearing myself, by comparisons.

If she escape a settled delirium when my plots unravel, I think it is all I ought to be concerned about. What therefore I desire of thee, is, That, if two constructions may be made of my actions, thou wilt afford me the most favourable. For this, not only friendship, but my own ingenuity, which has furnished thee with the knowlege of the facts, against which thou art so ready to inveigh, require of thee.



WILL is just returned from an errand to Hamstead ; and acquaints me, that Mrs. Townsend was yesterday at Mrs. Moore's, accompanied by three or four rough fellows. She was strangely surprised at the news, that my spouse and I are intirely reconciled ; and that two fine ladies, my relations, came to visit her, and went to town with her : Where she is very happy with me. She was sure we were not married, she said, unless it was while we were at Hamstead : And they were sure the ceremony was not performed there. But that the Lady is happy and easy, is

unquestionable : And a fling was thrown out by Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Bevis at *mischief-makers*, as they knew Mrs. Townsend to be acquainted with Miss Howe.

Now, since my Fair-one can neither receive, nor send away letters, I am pretty easy, as to this Mrs. Townsend, and her employer. And I fancy Miss Howe will be puzzled to know what to think of the matter, and afraid of sending by Wilson's conveyance ; and perhaps suppose, that her friend slighted her ; or has changed her mind in my favour, and is ashamed to own it ; as she has not had an answer to what she wrote ; and will believe, that the rustic delivered her last letter into her own hand.

Mean time, I have a little project come into my head, of a *new* kind ; just for amusement-sake, that's all : Variety has irresistible charms. I cannot live without intrigue. My charmer has no passions ; that is to say, none of the passions that I want her to have. She engages all my reverence. I am at present more inclined to regret what I have done, than to proceed to new offences : And shall regret it till I see how she takes it, when recovered.

Shall I tell thee my project ? 'Tis not a high one.—'Tis this—To get hither Mrs. Moore, Miss Rawlins, and my Widow Bevis ; for they are desirous to make a visit to my spouse, now we are so happy together. And, if I can order it right, Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and I, will shew them a little more of the ways of this wicked town, than they at present know. Why should they be *acquainted* with a man of my character, and not be the *better* and *wiser* for it ?—I would have every-body rail against rakes with *judgment* and *knowlege*, if they *will* rail. Two of these women gave me a great deal of trouble : And the third, I am confident, will forgive a merry evening.

I am really sick at heart for a frolick, and have
no

no doubt but this will be an agreeable one. These women already think me a wild fellow ; *nor do they like me the less for it*, as I can perceive ; and I shall take care, that they shall be treated with so much freedom before one another's faces, that in policy they shall keep each other's counsel. And won't this be doing a kind thing by them ? since it will knit an indissoluble band of union and friendship between three women who are neighbours, and at present have only *common obligations* to one another : For thou wantest not to be told, that secrets of love, and secrets of this nature, are generally the strongest cement of female friendships.

But, after all, if my Beloved should be happily restored to her intellects, we may have scenes arise between us, that will be sufficiently busy to employ all the faculties of thy friend, without looking out for new occasions. Already, as I have often observed, has she been the means of saving scores ; yet without her own knowledge.

Sat. Night.

By Dorcas's account of her Lady's behaviour, the dear creature seems to be recovering. I shall give the earliest notice of this to the worthy Captain Tomlinson, that he may apprise uncle John of it. I must be properly enabled, from that quarter to pacify her, or, at least, to rebate her first violence.

LETTER XXXI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

Sunday Afternoon, 6 o'Clock (June 18.)

I WENT out early this morning, and returned not till just now ; when I was informed, that my Beloved, in my absence, had taken it into her head to attempt to get away.

She tripp'd down, with a parcel tied up in a hand-

kerchief, her hood on ; and was actually in the entry, when Mrs. Sinclair saw her.

Pray, Madam, whipping between her and the street-door, be pleased to let me know whither you are going ?

Who has a right to controul me ? was the word.

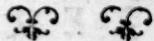
I have, Madam, by order of your spouse : And, kemboing her arms, as she owned, I desire you will be pleased to walk up again.

She would have spoken ; but could not : And, bursting into tears, turned back, and went up to her chamber : And Dorcas was taken to task for suffering her to be in the passage before she was seen.

This shews, as we hoped last night, that she is recovering her charming intellects.

Dorcas says, she was visible to her, but once before, the whole day ; and then seemed very solemn and sedate.

I will endeavour to see her. It must be in her own chamber, I suppose ; for she will hardly meet me in the dining-room. What advantage will the confidence of our sex give me over the modesty of hers, if she be recover'd !—I, the most confident of men : *She*, the most delicate of women. Sweet soul ! methinks, I have have her before me : Her face averted : Speech lost in sighs—Abash'd—Conscious—What a triumphant aspect will this give me, when I gaze in her downcast countenance !



THIS moment Dorcas tells me, she believes she is coming to find me out. She asked her after me : And Dorcas left her, drying her red-swoln eyes at her glass ; [No design of moving me by her tears !] sighing too sensibly for my courage. But to what purpose have I gone thus far, if I pursue not my principal end ? — Niceness must be a little abated. She knows the worst. That she cannot fly me ; that she must see me ; and that I can look her into a sweet confusion ; are

are circumstances greatly in my favour. What can she do, but rave and exclaim? I am used to raving and exclaiming—But, if recovered, I shall see how she behaves upon this our first sensible interview, after what she has suffered.

Here she comes!—

LETTER XXXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sunday Night.

NEVER blame me for giving way to have Art used with this admirable creature. All the princes of the air, or beneath it, joining with me, could never have subdued her while she had her senses.

I will not anticipate—Only to tell thee, that I am too much awaken'd by her to think of sleep, were I to go to bed; and so shall have nothing to do, but to write an account of our odd conversation, while it is so strong upon my mind that I can think of nothing else.

She was dress'd in a white damask night-gown, with less negligence than for some days past. I was sitting, with my pen in my fingers; and stood up when I first saw her, with great complaisance, as if the day were still her own. And so indeed it is.

She entered with such dignity in her manner, as struck me with great awe, and prepared me for the poor figure I made in the subsequent conversation. A poor figure indeed!—But I will do her justice.

She came up with quick steps, pretty close to me; a white handkerchief in her hand; her eyes neither fierce nor mild, but very earnest; and a fix'd sedateness in her whole aspect, which seemed to be the effect of deep contemplation: And thus she accosted me, with an air and action that I never saw equal'd.

You see before you, Sir, the wretch, whose preference of you to all your Sex you have rewarded—as it indeed deserved to be rewarded. My father's dreadful curse has already operated upon me in the very letter of it, as to This life; and it seems to me too evident, that it will not be your fault, that it is not intirely completed in the loss of my soul, as well as of my honour—Which you, villainous man! have robbed me of, with a baseness so unnatural, so inhuman, that, it seems, you, even *you*, had not the heart to attempt it, till my senses were made the previous sacrifice.

Here I made an hesitating effort to speak, laying down my pen—But she proceeded: — Hear me out, guilty wretch!—abandon'd man!—*Man* did I say?—

Yet what name else can I? since the mortal worryings of the fiercest beast would have been more natural, and infinitely more welcome, than what you have acted by me; and that with a premeditation and contrivance worthy only of that single heart, which now, *base* as well as ingrateful as thou art, seems to quake within thee.—And well may'st thou quake; well may'st thou tremble and falter; and hesitate, as thou dost, when thou reflectest upon what I have suffer'd for thy sake, and the returns thou hast made me!

By my soul, Belford, my whole frame was shaken: For not only her looks, and her action, but her voice, so solemn, was inexpressibly affecting: And then my cursed guilt, and her innocence, and merit, and rank, and superiority of talents, all stared me at that instant in the face so formidably, that my present account, to which she unexpectedly called me, seemed, as I then thought, to resemble that general one, to which we are told we shall be summoned, when our conscience shall be our accuser.

But

But she had had time to collect all the powers of her eloquence. The whole day probably in her intellects. And then I was the more disappointed, as I had thought I could have gazed the dear creature into confusion—But it is plain, that the sense she has of her wrongs sets this matchless woman *above all lesser, all weaker* considerations.

My dear—My love—I—I—I never—No never—Lips trembling, limbs quaking, voice inward, hesitating, broken—Never surely did miscreant look so like a miscreant! While thus she proceeded, waving her snowy hand, with all the graces of moving oratory.

I have no pride in the confusion visible in thy whole person. I have been all the day praying for a composure, if I could not escape from this vile house, that should once more enable me to look up to my destroyer with the consciousness of an innocent sufferer.—Thou seest me, since my wrongs are beyond the power of *words to express*, thou seest me, *calm enough* to wish, that thou mayst continue harassed by the workings of thy own conscience, till effectual repentance take hold of thee, that so thou mayst not forfeit all title to *that* mercy, which thou hast not shewn to the poor creature now before thee, who had so well deserved to meet with a faithful friend, where she met with the worst of enemies.

But tell me (for no doubt thou hast *some* scheme to pursue), Tell me, since I am a prisoner, as I find, in the vilest of houses, and have not a friend to protect or save me, what thou intendest shall become of the remnant of a life not worth the keeping? Tell me, if yet there are more evils reserved for me; and whether thou hast enter'd into a compact with the grand deceiver, in the person of his horrid agent in this house; and if the ruin of my soul, that my father's curse may be fulfilled, is to complete the triumphs of so vile a confederacy?—Answer me!—

Say, if thou hast courage to speak out to her whom thou hast ruined, tell me, what *further* I am to suffer from thy barbarity?

She stopp'd here; and, fighing, turn'd her sweet face from me, drying up with her handkerchief those tears which she endeavour'd to restrain; and, when she could not, to conceal from my sight.

As I told thee, I had prepared myself for high passions, raving, flying, tearing, execration: These transient violences, the workings of sudden grief, and shame, and vengeance, would have set us upon a par with each other, and quitted scores. These have I been accustomed to; and, as nothing violent is lasting, with these I could have wished to encounter. But such a majestic composure—Seeking me—whom yet, it is plain by her attempt to get away, she would have avoided seeing—No Lucretia-like vengeance upon herself in her thought—Yet swallow'd up, her whole mind swallow'd up, as I may say, by a grief so heavy, as, in her own words, to be beyond the power of speech to express—and to be able, discomposed as she was to the very morning, to put such a home-question to me, as if she had penetrated my future view—How could I avoid looking like a fool; and answering, as before, in broken sentences, and confusion?

What—What-a—What—has been done—I, I, I—cannot but say—Must own—Must confess—Hem—Hem—Is not right—Is not what should have been—But—a—But—But—I am truly—truly—sorry for it—Upon my soul I am—And—And—will do all—do every thing—Do what—What-ever is incumbent upon me—all that you—that you—that you shall require, to make you amends!—

O Belford! Belford! Whose the triumph now!—HERS, or MINE?

Amends! O thou truly despicable wretch!—Then, lifting up her eyes—Good Heaven! Who shall pity the

the creature, who could fall by so base a mind!— Yet—and then she looked indignantly upon me— Yet, I hate thee not, base and low-soul'd as thou art! half so much as I hate myself, that I saw thee not sooner in thy proper colours!—That I hoped either morality, gratitude, or humanity from a libertine, who, to be a libertine, must have got over and defied all moral sanctions (*a*).

She then called upon her cousin Morden's name, as if he had warned her against a man of free principles; and walked towards the window; her handkerchief at her eyes: But, turning short towards me, with an air of mingled scorn and majesty—[*What, at the moment, would I have given never to have injured her!*] What amends hast thou to propose!— What amends can such a one as Thou make to a person of spirit, or common sense, for the evils thou hast so inhumanly made me suffer?

As soon, Madam—As soon—as—As soon as your uncle—or—not waiting—

Thou wouldst tell me, I suppose—I know what thou wouldst tell me—But thinkest thou, that marriage will satisfy for a guilt like thine? Destitute as thou hast made me both of friends and fortune, I too much despise the wretch, *who could rob himself of his wife's virtue*, to endure the thoughts of thee, in the light thou seemest to hope I will accept thee in!—

I hesitated an interruption: But my meaning dy'd away upon my trembling lips. I could only pronounce the word *marriage*—And thus she proceeded:

Let me therefore know, whether I am to be controlled in the future disposal of myself? Whether, in a country of liberty, as *this*, where the Sovereign of it must not be guilty of *your* wickedness; and where *you* neither durst have attempted it, had I one friend or relation to look upon me, I am to be kept here.

(a) Her cousin Morden's words to her in his letter from Florence. See Vol. iii. p. 361.

here a prisoner, to sustain fresh injuries? Whether, in a word, you intend to hinder me from going whither my destiny shall lead me?

After a pause; for I was still silent;

Can you not answer me this plain question? — I quit all claim, all expectation upon you — What right have you to detain me here?

I could not speak. What could I say to such a question?

O wretch! wringing her uplifted hands, had I not been robbed of my senses, and that in the *basest* manner—You best know how—Had I been able to account for myself, and your proceedings, or to have known but how the days passed; a whole week should not have gone over my head, as I find it has done, before I had told you, what I now tell you—*That the man, who has been the villain to me you have been, shall never make me his wife.*—I will write to my uncle, to lay aside his kind intentions in my favour—All my prospects are shut in—I give myself up for a lost creature as to this world—Hinder me not from entering upon a life of severe penitence, for corresponding, after prohibition, with a wretch, who has too well justified all their warnings and inveteracy; and for throwing myself into the power of your vile artifices.—Let me try to secure the only hope I have left.—This is all the amends I ask of you. I repeat, therefore, Am I now at liberty to dispose of myself as I please?

Now comes the fool, the miscreant again, hesitating his broken answer: My dearest love, I am confounded, quite confounded, at the thought of what—of what has been done; and at the thought of—To whom: I see, I see, there is no withstanding your eloquence!—Such irresistible proofs of the love of virtue for its own sake—did I never hear of, nor meet with, in all my reading. And if you can forgive a repentant villain, that thus on his knees im-

plores

plores your forgiveness [Then down I dropt, absolutely in earnest in all I said], I vow by all that's Sacred and Just (and a may a thunderbolt strike me dead at your feet, if I am not sincere !), that I will by marriage, before to-morrow-noon, without waiting for your uncle, or any-body, do you all the justice I now *can* do you. And you shall ever after controul and direct me as you please, till you have made me more worthy of your angelic purity, than now I am : Nor will I presume so much as to touch your garment, till I have the honour to call so great a blessing lawfully mine.

O thou guileful betrayer ! There is a just God, whom thou invokest : Yet the thunderbolt descends not ; and thou livest to imprecate and deceive !

My dearest life ! rising ; for I hoped she was relenting—

Hadst thou not sinned beyond the *possibility* of forgiveness, interrupted she ; and had this been the first time that thus thou solemnly promisest and invokest the vengeance thou hast as often defied ; the desperation of my condition might have induced me to think of taking a wretched chance with a man so profligate. But, *after what I have suffered by thee*, it would be *criminal* in me to wish to bind my soul in covenant to a man so nearly ally'd to perdition.

Good God !—how uncharitable !—I offer not to defend—Would to Heaven that I could recall—*So nearly ally'd to perdition, Madam !*—So profligate a man, Madam !—

O how short is expression of thy crimes, and *my* sufferings !—Such premeditation in thy baseness !—To prostitute the characters of persons of honour of thy own family !—And all to delude a poor creature, whom thou oughtest — But why talk I to thee ?—Be thy crimes upon thy head !—Once more I ask thee, Am I, or am I not, at my own liberty *now* ?

I offer'd

I offer'd to speak in defence of the women, declaring that they really were the very persons—

Presume not, interrupted she, base as thou art, to say one word in thine own vindication on this head. I have been contemplating their behaviour, their conversation, their over-ready acquiescences to my declarations in thy disfavour ; their free, yet affectedly reserved light manners : And now, that the sad event has open'd my eyes, and I have compared facts and passages together, in the little interval that has been lent me, I wonder I could not distinguish the behaviour of the unmatron-like jilt whom thou broughtest to betray me, from the worthy lady whom thou hast the honour to call thy aunt : And that I could not detect the superficial creature, whom thou passedst upon me for the virtuous Miss Montague.

Amazing uncharitableness in a lady so good herself !—That the high spirits those ladies were in to see you, should subject them to such censures !—I do most solemnly vow, Madam—

That they were, interrupting me, *verily* and *indeed* Lady Betty Lawrance, and thy cousin Montague !—O wretch ! I see by thy solemn averment. [*I had not yet averr'd it*] what credit ought to be given to all the rest. Had I no other proof—

Interrupting her, I besought her patient ear. ‘ I
 ‘ had found myself,’ I told her, ‘ almost avowedly
 ‘ despised and hated. I had no hope of gaining her
 ‘ love, or her confidence. The letter she had left
 ‘ behind her, on her removal to Hamstead, suffi-
 ‘ ently convinced me, that she was intirely under
 ‘ Miss Howe’s influence, and waited but the return
 ‘ of a letter from her, to enter upon measures that
 ‘ would deprive me of her for ever : Miss Howe had
 ‘ ever been my enemy : More so then, no doubt,
 ‘ from the contents of the letter she had written to
 ‘ her on her first coming to Hamstead : That I dared
 ‘ not to stand the event of such a letter ; and was glad
 ‘ of

of an opportunity, by Lady Betty's and my cousin's means (tho' they knew not my motive), to get her back to town ; far, at the time, from intending the outrage which my despair, and her want of confidence in me, put me so vilely upon' —

I would have proceeded ; and particularly would have said something of Captain Tomlinson and her Uncle ; but she would not hear me further. And indeed it was with visible indignation, and not without several angry interruptions, that she heard me say so much.

Would I dare, she asked me, to offer at a palliation of my baseness ? — The two women, she was convinced, were impostors—She knew not but Captain Tomlinson, and Mr. Mennell were so too. But, whether *they* were so or not, *I* was. And she insisted upon being at her own disposal for the remainder of her short life—For indeed she abhorred me in every light ; and more particularly in that, in which I offer'd myself to her acceptance.

And, saying this, she flung from me ; leaving me absolutely shock'd and confounded at her part of a conversation, which she began with such uncommon, however severe composure, and concluded with so much sincere and unaffected indignation.

And now, Jack, I must address one serious paragraph *particularly* to thee.

I have not yet touched upon cohabitation—Her uncle's mediation she does not absolutely discredit, as I had the pleasure to find by one hint in this conversation—Yet she suspects my future views, and has doubts about Mennell and Tomlinson.

I do say, If she come *fairly* at her lights, at her clues, or what shall I call them ? her penetration is wonderful.

But if she do not come at them fairly, then is her incredulity, then is her antipathy to me, evidently accounted for.

I will

I will speak out—Thou couldst not, surely, play me booty, Jack?—Surely thou couldst not let thy weak pity for her lead thee to an unpardonable breach of trust to thy friend, who has been so unreserved in his communications to thee?

I cannot believe thee capable of such a baseness. Satisfy me, however, upon this head. I must make a cursed figure in her eye, vowing and protesting, as I shall not scruple occasionally to vow and protest, if all the time she has had unquestionable informations of my perfidy!—I know thou as little fearest me, as I do thee, in any point of manhood; and wilt scorn to deny it, if thou *hast* done it, when thus home pressed.

And here I have a good mind to stop, and write no farther, till I have thy answer.

And so I will.

Monday morn. past three.

LETTER XXXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Monday morn. 5 o'clock (June 19).

I Must write on. Nothing else can divert me: And I think thou canst not have been a dog to me.

I would fain have closed my eyes: But sleep flies me. Well says Horace, as translated by Cowley.

*The halcyon Sleep will never build his nest
In any stormy breast.*

*'Tis not enough, that he does find
Clouds and Darkness in the mind:*

Darkness but half his work will do.

'Tis not enough: He must find Quiet too.

Now indeed do I from my heart wish, that I had never known this lady. But who would have thought there had been such a woman in the world? Of all the sex I have hitherto known, or heard, or read of,

it was once subdued, and always subdued. The first struggle was generally the last ; or, at least, the subsequent struggles were so much fainter and fainter, that a man would rather have them, than be without them. But how know I yet—

IT is now near six—The sun has been illuminating, for several hours, every thing about me : For that impartial orb shines upon mother Sinclair's house, as well as upon any other : But nothing within me can it illuminate.

At day-dawn I looked thro' the key-hole of my Beloved's door. She had declared she would not put off her cloaths any more in this house. There I beheld her in a sweet slumber, which I hope will prove refreshing to her disturbed senses ; sitting in her elbow-chair, her apron over her head, and that supported by one sweet hand, the other hanging down upon her side, in a sleepy lifelessness ; half of one pretty foot only visible.

See the difference in our cases, thought I ! She, the charming injured, can sweetly sleep, while the varlet injurer cannot close his eyes ; and has been trying to no purpose, the whole night, to divert his melancholy, and to fly from himself !

As every vice generally brings on its own punishment, even in *this* life, if any thing were to tempt me to doubt of *future* punishment, it would be, that there can hardly be a greater, than that which I at this instant experience in my own remorse.

I hope it will go off.—If not, well will the dear creature be avenged ; for I shall be the most miserable of men.

Six o'clock.

JUST now Dorcas tells me, that her lady is preparing openly, and without disguise, to be gone. Very probable. The humour she flew away from me in

in last night, has given me expectation of such an enterprise.

Now, Jack, to be thus hated, and despised!—And if I have sinned beyond forgiveness—



BUT she has sent me a message by Dorcas, that she will meet me in the dining-room; and desires [Odd enough!] that the wench may be present at the conversation that shall pass between us. This message gives me hope.

Nine o'clock.

CONFOUNDED art, cunning, villainy!—By my soul, she had like to have slipt thro' my fingers. She meant nothing by her message, but to get Dorcas out of the way, and a clear coast. Is a fancied distress sufficient to justify this lady for dispensing with her principles? Does she not shew me, that she can wilfully deceive, as well as I? Had she been in the fore-house, and no passage to go thro' to get at the street-door, she had certainly been gone. But her haste betray'd her: For Sally Martin happening to be in the fore-parlour, and hearing a swifter motion than usual, and a rustling of silks, as if from somebody in a hurry, looked out; and seeing who it was, stept between her and the door, and set her back against it.

You must not go, Madam. Indeed you must not. By what right?—And how dare you?—And such like imperious airs the dear creature gave herself.—While Sally called out for her aunt; and half a dozen voices joined instantly in the cry, for me to hasten down, to hasten down, in a moment.

I was gravely instructing Dorcas above-stairs, and wondering what would be the subject of the conversation which she was to be a witness to, when these outcries reached my ears. And down I flew.—And there was the charming creature, the sweet deceiver, panting for breath, her back against the partition, a

parcel

parcel in her hand [Women make no excursions without their parcels] Sally, Polly (but Polly obligingly pleading for her) the Mother, Mabell, and Peter (the footman of the house), about her; all, however, keeping their distance; the Mother and Sally between her and the door—In her soft rage the dear soul, repeating, *I will go!*—Nobody has a right—I *will go!*—If you kill me, women, I won't go up again!

As soon as she saw me, she stept a pace or two towards me; Mr. Lovelace, *I will go!* said she—Do you authorize these women—What right have they, or *you* either, to stop me?

Is this, my dear, preparative to the conversation you led me to expect in the dining-room? And do you think I can part with you thus?—Do you think *I will*?

And am I, Sir, to be thus beset! — Surrounded thus?—What have these women to do with me?

I desired them to leave us, all but Dorcas, who was down as soon as I. I then thought it right to assume an air of resolution, having found my tame ness so greatly triumphed over. And now, my dear, said I (urging her reluctant feet), be pleased to walk into the fore-parlour. Here, since you will not go up stairs—Here we may *hold our parley*: and Dorcas *be witness to it*.—And now, Madam, seating her, and sticking my hands in my sides, your pleasure!

Insolent villain! said the furious lady. And, rising, ran to the window, and threw up the sash [She knew not, I suppose, that there were iron rails before the windows]. And, when she found she could not get out into the street, clasping her uplifted hands together—having dropt her parcel—For the love of God, good honest man!—For the love of God, mistress—to two passers-by—a poor, poor creature, said she, ruin'd!

I clasp'd her in my arms, people beginning to gather about the window: And then she cried out, Murder!

Help!

Help! help!—And carried her up to the dining-room, in spight of her little plotting heart (as I may now call it), altho' she violently struggled, catching hold of the banisters here and there, as she could. I would have seated her there, but she sunk down half-motionless, pale as ashes. And a violent burst of tears happily reliev'd her.

Dorcas wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her!

Violent hysterics succeeded. I left her to Mabell, Dorcas, and Polly; the latter the most supportable to her of the sisterhood.

This attempt, so resolutely made, alarmed me not a little.

Mrs. Sinclair, and her nymphs, are much more concerned; because of the reputation of their house, as they call it, having receiv'd some insults (broken windows threaten'd), to make them produce the young creature who cried out.

While the mabbish inquisitors were in the height of their office, the women came running up to me, to know what they should do; a constable being actually fetch'd.

Get the constable into the parlour, said I, with three or four of the forwardest of the mob, and produce one of the nymphs, onion-ey'd, in a moment, with disorder'd head-dres and neck-kerchief, and let her own herself the person: The occasion, a female skirmish; but satisfied with the justice done her. Then give a dram or two to each fellow, and all will be well.

Eleven o' clock.

ALL done, as I advised; and all is well.

Mrs. Sinclair wishes she never had seen the face of so skittish a lady; and she and Sally are extremely pressing with me, to leave the perverse beauty to their *breaking*, as they call it, for four or five days. But I cursed them into silence; only ordering double precaution for the future.

Polly,

Polly, tho' she consoled the dear perverse-one all she could, when *with her*, insists upon it *to me*, that nothing but terror will procure me tolerable usage.

Dorcas was challenged by the women upon her tears. She own'd them real. Said, She was ashamed of herself ; but could not help it. So sincere, so unyielding a grief, in so sweet a lady !—

The women laugh'd at her : But I bid her make no apologies for her tears, nor mind their laughing. I was glad to see them *so ready*. Good use might be made of such strangers. In short, I would have her indulge them often, and try if it were not possible to gain her lady's confidence by her concern for her.

She said, That her lady *did* take kind notice of them to her ; and was glad to see such tokens of humanity in her.

Well then, said I, your *part*, whether any thing come of it or not, is to be *tender-hearted*. It can do no harm, if no good. But take care you are not *too suddenly, or too officiously* compassionate.

So Dorcas will be a humane good sort of creature, I believe, very quickly with her lady. And as it becomes women to be so, and as my Beloved is willing to think highly of her own sex ; it will the more readily pass *with her*.

I thought to have had one trial (having gone so far) for *cohabitation*. But what hope can there be of succeeding ? — She is invincible ! — Against all my notions, against all my conceptions (thinking of her as a woman, and in the very bloom of her charms), she is absolutely invincible ! — My whole view, at the present, is to do her legal justice ! if I can but once more get her out of her altitudes !

The *consent* of such a lady, must make her ever new, ever charming. But, astonishing ! Can the want of a church ceremony make such a difference !

She *owes* me her consent ; for hitherto I have had nothing to boast of. All, of my side, has been deep remorse,

remorse, anguish of mind, and love increased rather than abated.

How her proud rejection stings me!—And yet I hope still to get her to listen to my stories of the family-reconciliation, and of her Uncle and Capt. Tomlinson.—And as she has given me a pretence to detain her, against her will, she *must* see me, whether in temper, or not—She cannot help it. And if Love will not do, Terror, as the women advise, must be tried.

A nice part, after all, has my Beloved to act. If she forgive me easily, I resume, perhaps, my projects:—If she carry her rejection into violence, that violence may make me desperate, and occasion fresh violence—She ought, since she thinks she has found the women out, to consider *where she is*.

I am confoundedly out of conceit with myself. If I give up my contrivances, my joy in stratagem, and plot, and invention, I shall be but a common man: Such another dull heavy creature as thyself. Yet what does even my success in my machinations bring me, but disgrace, repentance, regret? But I am overmatched, egregiously overmatched, by this lady. What to do with her, or without her, I know not.

L E T T E R XXXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

I Have this moment intelligence from Simon Parsons, one of Lord M.'s stewards, that his Lordship is very ill. Simon, who is my obsequious servant, in virtue of my presumptive heirship, gives me a hint in his letter, that my presence at M.-Hall will not be amis. So, I must accelerate, whatever be the course I shall be allowed or compelled to take.

No bad prospects for this charming creature, if the old peer would be so kind as to surrender; and many a summons has his gout given him. A good 8000*l.* a year; and perhaps the title reversionary, would help me up with her.

Proudly

Proudly as this lady pretends to be above all pride, grandeur will have its charms with her; for grandeur always makes a man's face shine in a woman's eye. I have a pretty good, because a clear, estate, as it is: But what a noble variety of mischief will 8000*l.* a year enable a man to do?

Perhaps thou'l say, I do *already* all that comes into my head: But that's a mistake — Not one half, I will assure thee. And even *good folks*, as I have heard, love to have the *power* of doing mischief, whether they make *use of it*, or not. The late Queen Anne, who was a very good woman, was always fond of *prerogative*. And her ministers, in her name, in more instances than one, made a *ministerial* use of this her foible.



BUT now, at last, am I to be admitted to the presence of my angry Fair-one: After three denials, nevertheless; and a *peremptory* from me, by Dorcas, that I must see her in her chamber, if I cannot see her in the dining-room.

Dorcas, however, tells me, that she says, If she were at her own liberty, she would never see me more; and that she has been asking after the characters and conditions of the neighbours. I suppose, now she has found her voice, to call out for help from them, if there were any to hear her.

She will have it now, it seems, that I had the wickedness, from the very beginning, to contrive for her ruin, a house so convenient for dreadful mischief.

Dorcas begs of her to be pacified—Intreats her to see me with patience—Tells her, that I am one of the most determin'd of men, as she has heard say—That gentleness may do with me; but that nothing else will, she believes. And what, as her ladyship (as she always stiles her) is *married*, if I had broke my oath, or intended to break it!—

She hinted plain enough to the honest wench, that she was *not* married.—But Dorcas would not understand her.

This shews, that she is resolv'd to keep no measures. And now is to be a trial of skill, whether she shall or not.

Dorcas has hinted to her my Lord's illness, as a piece of intelligence that dropped in conversation from me.

But here I stop. My Beloved, pursuant to my peremptory message, is just gone up into the dining-room.

LETTER XXXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Monday afternoon, June 19.

PITY me, Jack, for pity's sake; since, if thou dost not, no-body else will: And yet never was there a man of my genius, and lively temper, that wanted it more. We are apt to attribute to the devil every-thing that happens to us, which we would not *have* happen: But here, being (as perhaps thou'l say) the devil, myself, my plagues arise from an angel. I suppose all mankind is to be plagu'd by its *contrary*.

She began with me like a true woman (*She* in the fault, *I* to be blamed) the moment I enter'd the dining-room:—Not the least apology, not the least excuse, for the uproar she had made, and the trouble she had given me.

I come, said she, into thy detested presence, because I cannot help it. But why am I to be imprison'd here?—Altho' to no purpose, I cannot help—

Dearest Madam, interrupted I, give not way to so much violence. You must know, that your detention is intirely owing to the desire I have to make you all the amends that is in my power to make you. And This, as well for *your* sake as *my own*.—Surely, there is still *one* way left to repair the wrongs you have suffer'd—

Canst thou blot out the past week? *Several weeks* past,

past, I should say ; ever since I have been with thee ?
Canst thou call back time ?—If thou canst——

Surely, Madam, again interrupting her, If I may be permitted to call you *legally* mine, I might have but anticip——

Wretch, that thou art ! Say not another word upon this subject. When thou vowedst, when thou promisedst at Hamstead, I had begun to think, that I must be thine. If I had consented, at the request of those I thought thy relations, this would have been a principal inducement, That I could then have brought thee, what was *most* wanted, an unsullied honour in dowry, to a wretch destitute of all honour ; and could have met the gratulations of a family, to which thy life has been one continued disgrace, with a consciousness of *deserving* their gratulations. But thinkest thou, that I will give a harlot-niece to thy honourable uncle, and to thy *real* aunts ; and a cousin to thy cousins from a brothel ? For such, in my opinion, is this detested house !—Then, lifting up her clasped hands,

‘ Great and good God of Heaven, said she, give
‘ me patience to support myself under the weight of
‘ those afflictions, which Thou, for wise and good
‘ ends, tho’ at present impenetrable by me, hast
‘ permitted !

Then, turning towards me, who knew neither what to say *to* her, nor *for* myself, I renounce thee for ever, Lovelace !—Abhorred of my soul ! for ever I renounce thee ! — Seek thy fortunes wheresoever thou wilt !—Only now, that thou hast already ruin’d me——

Ruin’d you, Madam — The world need not — I knew not what to say——

Ruin’d me in my *own* eyes, and that is the same to me, as if *all the world* knew it — Hinder me not from going whither my mysterious destiny shall lead me——

Why hesitate you, Sir ? What right have you to

stop me, as you lately did ; and to bring me up by force, my hands and arms bruised with your violence ? What right have you to detain me here ?

I am cut to the heart, Madam, with invectives so violent. I am but too sensible of the wrong I have done you, or I could not bear your reproaches. The man who perpetrates a villainy, and resolves to go on with it, shews not the compunction I shew. Yet, if you think yourself in my power, I would caution you, Madam, not to make me desperate. For you shall be mine, or my life shall be the forfeit ! Nor is life worth having without you !—

Be thine !—I be thine !—said the passionate Beauty. O how lovely in her violence !—

Yes, Madam, Be mine !—I repeat, You shall be mine !—My very crime is your glory. My love, my admiration of you is increased by what has passed : *And so it ought.* I am willing, Madam, to court your returning favour : But let me tell you, were the house beset by a thousand armed men, resolved to take you from me, they should not effect their purpose, while I had life.

I never, never will be yours, said she, clasping her hands together, and lifting up her eyes !—I never will be yours !

We may yet see many happy years, Madam. All your friends may be reconciled to you. The treaty for that purpose is in greater forwardness than you imagine. You know better than to think the worse of yourself for suffering what you could not help. Injoin but the terms I can make my peace with you upon, and I will instantly comply.

Never, never, repeated she, will I be yours !—

Only forgive me, my dearest life, this one time !—A virtue so invincible ! what further view can I have against you ?—Have I attempted any further outrage ?—If you will be mine, your injuries will be injuries done to myself. You have too well guessed at the unnatural

unnatural arts that have been used? — But can a greater testimony be given of your virtue? — And now I have only to hope, that altho' I cannot make you *complete* amends, yet that you will permit me to make you *all* the amends that can possibly be made.

Hear me out, I beseech you, Madam; for she was going to speak with an aspect unpacifiedly angry: The God, whom you serve, requires but repentance and amendment. Imitate *Him*, my dearest love, and bless me with the *means* of reforming a course of life, that begins to be hateful to me. *That* was once your favourite point. Resume it, dearest creature: In charity to a soul as well as body, which once, as I flatter'd myself, was *more* than indifferent to you, resume it. And let to-morrow's sun witness to our espousals.

I cannot judge thee, said she; but the God to whom thou so boldly referrest, can; and assure thyself *He* will. But, if compunction has *really* taken hold of thee; if *indeed* thou art touched for thy ingrateful baseness, and meanest any thing by pleading the holy example thou recommendest to my imitation; in this thy pretended repentant moment, let me sift thee thoroughly; and, by thy answer, I shall judge of the sincerity of thy pretended declarations.

Tell me then, Is there any reality in the treaty thou hast pretended to be on foot between my Uncle and Captain Tomlinson, and thyself? — Say, and hesitate not, is there any truth in that story? — But, remember, if there be *not*, and thou avowest that there *is*, what further condemnation attends thy averment, if it be as solemn, as I require it to be!

This was a cursed thrust. What could I say? — Surely, this merciless lady is resolved to damn me, thought I, and yet accuses me of a design against her soul! — But was I not obliged to proceed as I had begun?

In short, I solemnly averr'd, that there was!—How one crime, as the good folks say, brings on another?

I added, That the Captain had been in town, and would have waited on her, had she not been indisposed: That he went down much afflicted, as well on her account, as on that of her uncle; tho' I had not acquainted him either with the nature of her disorder, or the ever-to-be-regretted occasion of it; having told him, that it was a violent fever: That he had twice since, by her uncle's desire, sent up to inquire after her health: And that I had already dispatched a man and horse with a letter, to acquaint him (and her uncle thro' him) with her recovery; making it my earnest request, that he would renew his application to her uncle for the favour of his presence at the private celebration of our nuptials; and that I expected an answer, if not this night, as to-morrow.

Let me ask thee next, said she, Thou knowest the opinion I have of the women thou broughtest to me at Hamstead; and who have seduced me hither to my ruin; Let me ask thee, If *really* and *truly*, they were Lady Betty Lawrance and thy cousin Montague?—What sayest thou—Hesitate not—What sayest thou to this question?

Astonishing, my dear, that you should suspect them!—But, knowing your strange opinion of them, what can I say to be believed?

And is *this* the answer thou returnest me? Dost thou *thus* evade my question? But let me know, for I am trying thy sincerity now, and shall judge of thy new professions by thy answer to this question; Let me know, I repeat, whether those women be *really* Lady Betty Lawrance and thy cousin Montague?

Let me, my dearest love, be enabled to-morrow to call you lawfully mine, and we will set out the next day, if you please, to Berkshire, to my Lord M.'s, where

where they both are at this time, and you shall convince yourself by your own eyes, and by your own ears; which you will believe sooner than all I can say or swear.

Now, Belford, I had really some apprehension of treachery from thee; which made me so miserably evade; for else, I could as safely have sworn to the truth of this, as to that of the former: But she pressing me still for a categorical answer, I ventur'd plumb; and swore to it [*Lovers oaths, Jack*] that they were really and truly Lady Betty Lawrance and my cousin Montague.

She lifted up her hands, and eyes—What can I think!—What *can* I think!—

You *think* me a devil, Madam; a very devil! or you could not, after you have put these questions to me, seem to doubt the truth of answers so solemnly sworn to.

And if I do think thee so, have I not cause? Is there another man in the world (I hope, for the sake of human nature, there is not) who could act by any poor friendless creature as thou hast acted by me, whom thou hast *made* friendless—And who, before I knew thee, had for a friend every one who knew me?

I told you, Madam, *before*, that my aunt and cousin were actually here, in order to take leave of you, before they set out for Berkshire. But the effects of my ingrateful crime (such, with shame and remorse, I own it to be!) were the reason you could not see them. Nor could I be fond, that they should see *you*: Since they never would have forgiven me, had they known what had passed—And what reason had I to expect your silence on the subject, had you been recover'd?

It signifies nothing now, that the cause of their appearance has been answer'd in my ruin, *who* or *what* they are: But, if thou hast averr'd thus so-

lernly to two falsehoods, what a wretch do I see before me !—

I thought she had now reaſon to be fatiſhied ; and I begg'd her to allow me to talk to her of to-morrow, as of the happiest day of my life. We have the Licence, Madam—And you *muſt* excuse me, that I cannot let you go hence, till I have try'd every way I can try, to obtain your forgiuenesſ.

And am I then (with a kind of frantic wildnes) to be detained a prisoner in this horrid house ?—Am I, Sir ?—Take care !—Take care ! holding up her hand, menacing, how you make me desperate !—If I fall, tho' by my own hand, inquisition will be made for my blood : And be not out in thy plot, Lovelace, if it *ſhould* be ſo—Make *ſure* work, I charge thee : Dig a hole deep enough to cram in and conceal this unhappy body : For, depend upon it, that ſome of thoſe, who will not stir to protect me living, will move heaven and earth, to avenge me dead !

A horrid dear creature !—By my ſoul, ſhe made me ſhudder ! She had need, indeed, to talk of *her* unhappineſs, in falling into the hands of the only *man* in the world, who could have uſed her, as I have uſed her ! She is the only *woman* in the world, who could have ſhock'd and diſturb'd me, as ſhe has done.—So we are upon a foot in that respect. And I think I have the *worſt* of it by much. Since very little has been my joy ; very muſch my trouble : And *her* punishment, as ſhe calls it, is *over* : But when *mine* will, or what it *may be*, who can tell ?

Here, only recapitulating [think, then, how I muſt be affected at the time], I was forced to leave off, and ſing a ſong to myſelf. I aimed at a lively air ; but I croaked rather than ſung : And fell into the old diſmal thirtieth of January strain. I hemm'd up for a ſprightlier note ; but it would not do : And at laſt I ended, like a malefactor, in a dead psalm-melody..

High-ho !

High-ho!—I gape like an unfledg'd kite in its nest, wanting to swallow a chicken, bobb'd at its mouth, by its marauding dam!—

What a devil ails me!—I can neither think nor write!—

Lie down, pen, for a moment!—

LETTER XXXVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;.

THERE is certainly a good deal in the observation, *That it costs a man ten times more pains to be wicked, than it would cost him to be good.* What a confounded number of contrivances have I had recourse to, in order to carry my point with this charming creature; and, after all, how have I puzzled myself by it; and yet am near tumbling into the pit, which it was the end of all my plots to shun! What a happy man had I been, with such an excellence, could I have brought my mind to marry when I first prevailed upon her to quit her father's house! But then, as I have often reflected, how had I known, that a but blossoming beauty, who could carry on a private correspondence, and run such risques with a notorious wild fellow, was not prompted by inclination, which one day might give such a free liver as myself, as much pain to reflect upon, as, at the time, it gave me pleasure? Thou rememb'rest the Host's tale in Ariosto. And thy experience, as well as mine, can furnish out twenty *Fiametta's* in proof of the imbecility of the sex.

But to proceed with my narrative.

The dear creature resumed the topic her heart was so firmly fixed upon; and insisted upon quitting the *odious house*, and that in very high terms.

I urged her to meet me the next day at the altar, in either of the two churches mentioned in the Licence.

And I besought her, whatever were her resolution, to let me debate this matter calmly with her.

If, she said, I would have her give what I desired, the least moment's consideration, I must not hinder her from being her own mistress. To what purpose did I ask her *consent*, if she had not a power over either her own person or actions?

Will you give me your honour, Madam, if I consent to your quitting a house so disagreeable to you?—

My honour, Sir! said the dear creature—Alas!—And turned weeping from me with imitable grace—As if she had said—Alas!—You have robb'd me of my honour!

I hoped then, that her angry passions were subsiding!—But I was mistaken!—For, urging her warmly for the day; and that for the sake of our mutual honour, and the honour of both our families, in this high-flown, and high-soul'd strain, she answer'd me:

And canst thou, Lovelace, be so *mean*—as to wish to make a wife of the creature thou hast insulted, dishonoured, and abused, as thou hast me? Was it necessary to humble Clarissa Harlowe down to the low level of thy baseness, before she could be a wife meet for thee? Thou hadst a father, who was a man of honour: A mother, who deserved a better son—Thou hast an uncle, who is no dishonour to the peerage of a kingdom, whose peers are more respectable than the nobility of any other country. Thou hast other relations also, who may be *thy* boast, tho' thou canst not be *theirs*. And canst thou not imagine, that thou hearest them calling upon thee; the dead from their monuments; the living from their laudable pride; not to dishonour thy antient and splendid house, by entering into wedlock, with a creature whom thou hast levelled with the dirt of the street, and clasped with the vilest of her sex?

I ex-

I extoll'd her greatness of soul, and her virtue. I execrated myself for my guilt : And told her, how grateful to the *manes* of my ancestors, as well as to the wishes of the living, the honour I supplicated for, would be.

But still she insisted upon being a free agent ; of seeing herself in other lodgings before she would give what I urged the *least* consideration. Nor would she promise me favour even then, or to permit my visits. How then, as I asked her, could I comply, without resolving to lose her for ever ?

She put her hand to her forehead often as she talked ; and at last, pleading disorder in her head, retired ; neither of us satisfied with the other. But *she* ten times more dissatisfied with me, than I with her.

Dorcas seems to be coming into favour with her—
What now !—What now !—

Monday Night.

How determin'd is this lady !—Again had she like to have escaped us !—What a fixed resentment !— She only, I find, assumed a little calm, in order to quiet suspicion. She was got down, and actually had unbolted the street-door, before I could get to her ; alarmed as I was by Mrs. Sinclair's cookmaid, who was the only one that saw her fly thro' the passage : Yet lightning was not quicker than I.

Again I brought her back to the dining-room, with infinite reluctance on her part. And before her face, ordered a servant to be placed constantly at the bottom of the stairs for the future.

She seem'd even choak'd with grief and disappointment.

Dorcas was exceedingly assiduous about her ; and confidently gave it as her own opinion, that her dear lady should be permitted to go to another lodging, since *this* was so disagreeable to her : Were she

to be killed for saying so, she would say it. And was good Dorcas for this afterwards.

But for some time the dear creature was all passion and violence—

I fee, I see, said she, when I had brought her up, what I am to expect from your new professions, O vilest of men !—

Have I offered to you, my beloved creature, any thing that can justify this impatience, after a more hopeful calm ?

She wrung her hands. She disorder'd her head-dres. She tore her ruffles. She was in a perfect phrensy..

I dreaded her returning malady : But intreaty rather exasperating, I affected an angry air—I bid her expect the worst she had to fear—And was menacing on, in hopes to intimidate her, when, dropping down at my feet,

'Twill be a mercy, said she, the highest act of mercy you can do, to kill me outright upon this spot—This happy spot, as I will, in my last moments, call it !—Then, baring, with a still more frantic violence, part of her enchanting neck—Here, here, said the soul-harrowing beauty, let thy pointed mercy enter ! And I will thank thee, and forgive thee for all the dreadful past !—With my latest gasp will I forgive and thank thee !—Or help me to the means, and I will myself put out of thy way so miserable a wretch ! And bless thee for those means !

Why all this extravagant passion, why all these exclamations ? Have I offered any new injury to you, my dearest life ! What a phrensy is this ! Am I not ready to make you all the reparation that I can make you ? Had I not reason to hope—

No, no, no, no—half a dozen times, as fast as she could speak.

Had I not reason to hope, that you were meditating upon the means of making me happy, and yourself

yourself not miserable, rather than upon a flight so causeless and so precipitate?—

No, no, no, no, as before, shaking her head with wild impatience, as resolved not to attend to what I said.

My resolutions are so honourable, if you will permit them to take effect, that I need not be solicitous whither you go, if you will but permit my visits, and receive my vows. And, God is my witness, that I bring you not back from the door with any view to your dishonour, but the contrary: And this moment I will send for a minister to put an end to all your doubts and fears.

Say this, and say a thousand times more, and bind every word with a solemn appeal to that God, whom thou art accustomed to invoke to the truth of the vilest falsehoods, and all will still be short of what thou *hast* vowed and promised to me. And, were not my heart to abhor thee, and to rise against thee, for thy *perjuries*, as it *does*, I would not, I tell thee once more, I would not, bind my soul in covenant with such a man, for a thousand worlds!

Compose yourself, however, Madam; for *your own sake*, compose yourself. Permit me to raise you up; *abhorred* as I am of your soul!—

Nay, if I must not touch you; for she wildly clapt my hands; but with such a sweet passionate air, her bosom heaving and throbbing as she looked up to me, that altho' I was most sincerely enraged, I could with transport have press'd her to mine—

If I must not touch you, I will not.—But depend upon it (and I assumed the sternest air I could assume, to try what *that* would do), depend upon it, Madam, that this is not the way to avoid the evils you dread. Let me do what I will, I cannot be used worse!—Dorcas, be gone!

She arose, Dorcas being about to withdraw, and wildly caught hold of her arm: O Dorcas! If thou

art of mine own sex, leave me not, I charge thee!—Then quitting Dorcas, down she threw herself upon her knees, in the furthermost corner of the room, clasping a chair with her face laid upon the bottom of it!—O where can I be safe?—Where, where can I be safe, from this man of violence?

This gave Dorcas an opportunity to confirm herself in her lady's confidence: The wench threw herself at my feet, while I seemed in violent wrath; and, embracing my knees, Kill me, Sir, kill me, Sir, if you please!—I must throw myself in your way, to save my lady. I beg your pardon, Sir—But you must be set on!—God forgive the mischief-makers!—But your own heart, if left to itself, would not permit these things!—Spare, however, Sir! spare my lady, I beseech you! bustling on her knees about me, as if I were intending to approach her lady, had I not been restrained by her.

This, humour'd by me, Begone, devil!—Officious devil, begone!—startled the dear creature; who, snatching up hastily her head from the chair, and as hastily popping it down again in terror, hit her nose, I suppose, against the edge of the chair; and it gush'd out with blood, running in a stream down her bosom; she herself too much affrighted to heed it!—

Never was mortal man in such terror and agitation as I; for I instantly concluded, that she had stabb'd herself with some concealed instrument.

I ran to her in a wild agony—for Dorcas was frightened out of all her mock interposition—

What have you done!—O what have you done!—Look up to me, my dearest life!—Sweet injur'd innocence, look up to me! What have you done!—Long will I not survive you!—And I was upon the point of drawing my sword to dispatch myself, when I discover'd— [What an unmanly blockhead does this charming creature make me at her pleasure!] that

that all I apprehended was but a bloody nose, which, as far as I know (for it could not be stopp'd in a quarter of an hour), may have saved her head, and her intellects.

But I see by this scene, that the sweet creature is but a pretty coward at bottom; and that I can terrify her out of her virulence against me, whenever I put on sternness and anger: But then, as a qualifer to the advantage this gives me over her, I find myself to be a coward too, which I had not before suspected, since I was capable of being so easily terrified by the apprehensions of her offering violence to herself.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

BUT, with all this dear creature's resentment against me, I cannot, for my heart, think but she will get all over, and consent to enter the pale with me. Were she even to die to-morrow, and to know she should, would not a woman of her sense, of her punctilio, and in her situation, and of so proud a family, rather die married, than otherwise? —No doubt but she would; altho' she were to hate the man ever so heartily. If so, there is now but one man in the world whom she can have—And that is *Me*.

Now I talk [familiar writing is but talking, Jack] thus glibly of entering the pale, thou wilt be ready to question me, I know, as to my intentions on this head.

As much of my heart, as I know of it myself, will I tell thee.—When I am from her, I cannot still help hesitating about marriage, and I even frequently resolve against it; and am resolved to press my favourite scheme for cohabitation. But when I am with her, I am ready to say, to swear, and to do, whatever

whatever I think will be most acceptable to her : And were a parson at hand, I should plunge at once, no doubt of it, into the state.

I have frequently thought, in common cases, that it is happy for many giddy fellows [There are giddy fellows, as well as giddy girls, Jack ; and perhaps those are as often drawn in, as these], that ceremony and parade are necessary to the irrevocable solemnity ; and that there is generally time for a man to recollect himself in the space between the heated overnight, and the cooler next morning ; or I know not who could escape the sweet gypsies, whose fascinating powers are so much aided by our own raised imaginations.

A wife at any time, I used to say. I had ever confidence and vanity enough, to think, that no woman breathing could deny her hand, when I held out mine. I am confoundedly mortified to find, that this lady is able to hold me at bay, and to refuse all my honest vows.

What force [allow me a serious reflection, Jack : It will be put down !] What force have evil habits upon the human mind ! When we enter upon a devious course, we think we shall have it in our power, when we will, to return to the right path. But it is not so, I plainly see : For, who can acknowlege with more justice this dear creature's merits, and his own errors, than I ? Whose regret, at times, can be deeper than mine, for the injuries I have done her ? Whose resolutions to repair those injuries stronger ?—Yet how transitory is my penitence !—How am I hurried away—Canst thou tell by what ?—O devil of Youth, and devil of Intrigue, how do ye mislead me !—How often do we end in occasions for the deepest remorse, what we begin in wantonness !—

At the present writing, however, the turn of the scale

scale is in favour of matrimony—For I despair of carrying with her my favourite point.

The lady tells Dorcas, that her heart is broken ; and that she shall live but a little while. I think nothing of that, if we marry. In the first place, she knows not what a mind unapprehensive will do for her, in a state to which all the sex look forward with high satisfaction. How often have the whole sacred conclave been thus deceived in their choice of a pope ; not considering, that the new dignity is of itself sufficient to give new life ! — A few months heart's-ease will give my charmer a quite different notion of things : And I dare say, as I have heretofore said (a), once married, and I am married for life.

I will allow, that her pride, in *one* sense, has suffered abasement : But her triumph is the greater in every other. And while I can think, that all her trials are but additions to her honour, and that I have laid the foundations of her glory in my own shame, can I be called cruel, if I am *not* affected with her grief, as some men would be ? —

And for what should her heart be broken ? Her will is unviolated : — At *present*, however, her will is unviolated. The destroying of good habits, and the introducing of bad, to the corrupting of the whole heart, is the violation. That her will is not to be corrupted, that her mind is not to be debased, she has hitherto unquestionably proved. And if she give cause for further trials, and hold fast her integrity ; what *ideas* will she have to dwell upon, that will be able to corrupt her morals ? — What *vestigia*, what *remembrances*, but such as will inspire abhorrence of the attempter ?

What nonsense then to suppose, that such a mere notional violation, as she has suffered, should be able to cut asunder the strings of life ?

Her

(a) See p. 203. of this Volume.

Her religion, married, or not married, will set her above making such a trifling accident, such an *involuntary suffering*, fatal to her.

Such considerations as these, they are, that support me against all apprehension of bugbear consequences : And I would have them have weight with thee ; who art such a doughty advocate for her. And yet I allow thee this ; That she really makes too much of it : Takes it too much to heart. To be sure she ought to have forgot it by this time, except the charming, charming consequence happen, that still I am in hopes will happen, were I to proceed no further. And, if she apprehend this herself, then has the dear over-nice soul some reason for taking it so much to heart : And yet would not, I think, refuse to legitimate.

O Jack ! had I an imperial diadem, I swear to thee, that I would give it up, even to my *enemy*, to have one charming boy by this lady. And should she *escape me*, and no such effect follow, my revenge on her family, and, in *such* a case, on herself, would be incomplete, and I should reproach myself as long as I lived.

Were I to be sure, that this foundation is laid [And why may I not hope it is ?], I should not doubt to have her still (should she withstand her day of grace) on my own conditions : Nor should I, if it were so, question that *revived* affection in *her*, which a woman seldom fails to have for the father of her first child, whether born in wedlock, or out of it.

And pr'ythee, Jack, see in this *aspiration*, let me call it, a distinction in my favour from other rakes ; who almost to a man follow their inclinations, without troubling themselves about consequences. In imitation, as one would think, of the strutting villain of a bird, which from feather'd lady to feather'd lady pursues his imperial pleasures, leaving it to his sleek

sleek paramours to hatch the genial product, in holes and corners of their own finding out.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday Morn. June 20.

WELL, Jack, now are we upon another foot together. This dear creature will not *let me be good*. She is now authorizing all my plots by her own example.

Thou must be partial in the highest degree, if now thou blamest me for resuming my former schemes, since in that case I shall but follow her clue. No forced construction of her actions do I make on this occasion, in order to justify a bad cause, or a worse intention. A little pretence, indeed, served the wolf, when he had a mind to quarrel with the lamb ; but this is not now my case.

For here (Wouldst thou have thought it ?), taking advantage of Dorcas's compassionate temper, and of some warm expressions, which the tender-hearted wench let fall against the cruelty of men ; and wishing to have it in her power to serve her ; has she given her the following Note, signed by her maiden name : For she has thought fit, in positive and plain words, to own to the pitying Dorcas, that she is not married.

Monday, June 19....

I The underwritten do hereby promise, that, on my coming into possession of my own estate, I will provide for Dorcas Martindale in a gentlewoman-like manner, in my own house : Or, if I do not soon obtain that possession, or should first die, I do hereby bind myself, my executors, and administrators, to pay to her, or her order, during the term of her natural life, the sum

sum of five pounds on each of the four usual quarterly days in the year ; that is to say, twenty pounds by the year ; on condition that she faithfully assist me in my escape from an illegal confinement, which I now labour under. The first quarterly payment to commence, and be payable, at the end of three months immediately following the day of my deliverance. And I do also promise to give her, as a testimony of my honour in the rest, a diamond ring, which I have shewed her. Witness my hand, this nineteenth day of June, in the year above-written.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Now, Jack, what terms wouldst thou have me to keep with such a sweet corruptress ?—Seest thou not how she hates me ?—Seest thou not, that she is resolved never to forgive me ?—Seest thou not, however, that she must disgrace herself in the eye of the world, if she actually should escape ?—That she must be subjected to infinite distress and hazard ?—For whom has she to receive and protect her ?—Yet to determine to risque all these evils !—And furthermore to stoop to artifice, to be guilty of the reigning vice of the times, of bribery and corruption ! O Jack, Jack ! say not, write not, another word in her favour !—

Thou hast blamed me for bringing her to this house : But had I carried her to any other in England, where there would have been one servant or inmate capable either of *compassion* or *corruption*, what must have been the consequence ?

But seest thou not, however, that, in this flimsy contrivance, the dear implacable, like a drowning man, catches at a straw to save herself !—A straw shall she find to be the refuge she has resorted to.

LETTER

LETTER XXXIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday Morn. 10 o'Clock.

VERY ill!—Exceeding ill!—as Dorcas tells me, in order to avoid seeing me—And yet the dear soul may be so in her *mind*—But is not that equivocation?—Some one passion predominating, in every human breast, breaks thro' principle, and controuls us all. Mine is *love* and *revenge* taking turns. Hers is *hatred*.—But this is my consolation, that *hatred appeased, is love begun; or love renew'd*, I may rather say, if love ever had footing here.

But *reflectioning* apart, thou seest, Jack, that her plot is beginning to work. To-morrow it is to break out.

I have been abroad, to set on foot a plot of circumvention. All fair now, Belford!—

I insisted upon visiting my indisposed fair one. Dorcas made officious excuses for her. I cursed the wench in her hearing for her impertinence; and stamp'd, and made a clutter;—which was improved into an apprehension to the lady, that I would have flung her faithful confidante from the top of the stairs to the bottom.

He is a violent wretch!—But, Dorcas (*dear Dorcas now it is*), thou shalt have a friend in me to the last day of my life.

And what now dost think, the name of her *good angel* is?—Why *Dorcas Martindale*, Christian and super (no more Wykes) as in the promisory note in my former—And the dear creature has bound her to her by the *most solemn* obligations, *besides* the tie of interest.

Whither, Madam, do you design to go when you get out of this house?

I will

I will throw myself into the first open house I can find ; and beg protection till I can get a coach, or a lodging in some honest family.

What will you do for cloaths, Madam ?—I doubt you'll not be able to take any away with you, but what you'll have on.

O no matter for cloaths, if I can but get out of this house.

What will you do for money, Madam ? I have heard his Honour express his concern, that he could not prevail upon you to be obliged to him, tho' he apprehended, that you must be short of money.

O, I have rings, and other valuables. Indeed I have but four guineas, and two of them, I found lately wrapt up in a bit of lace, designed for a charitable use : But now, alas ! Charity begins at home ! But I have one dear friend left, if she be living, as I hope in God she is ! to whom I can be obliged, if I want. O Dorcas ! I must ere now have heard from her, if I had had fair play.

Well, Madam, yours is a hard lot. I pity you at my heart !

Thank you, Dorcas ! —I am unhappy, that I did not think *before*, that I might have confided in thy pity, and in thy sex !

I pitied you, Madam, often and often : But you were always, as I thought, diffident of me. And then I doubted not but you were married ; and I thought his Honour was unkindly used by you. So that I thought it my duty to wish well to his Honour, rather than to what I thought to be your humours, Madam. Would to heaven, that I had known before, that you were not married !—Such a lady !—Such a fortune !—To be so sadly betrayed !—

Ah, Dorcas ! I was basely drawn in ! My youth ! My ignorance of the world !—And I have some things to reproach myself with, when I look back !

Lord,

Lord, Madam, what deceitful creatures are these men!—Neither oaths, nor vows!—I am sure! I am sure!—And then with her apron she gave her eyes half a dozen hearty rubs—I may curse the time that I came into this house!—

Here was accounting for her bold eyes! And was it not better to give up a house, which her lady could not think worse of than she did, in order to gain the reputation of sincerity, than by offering to vindicate it, to make her proffered services suspected?

Poor Dorcas!—Bless me! how little do we, who have lived all our time in the country, know of this wicked town!—

Had I been able to write, cried the veteran wench, I should certainly have given some other near relations I have in Wales, a little *inkling* of matters; and they would have saved me from—from—from—

Her sobs were enough. The apprehensions of women on such subjects are ever beforehand with speech.

And then, sobbing on, she lifted her apron to her face again. She shewed me how.

Poor Dorcas!—Again wiping her own charming eyes.

All love, all compassion, is this dear creature to every one in affliction, but me.

And would not an aunt protect her kinswoman?—Abominable wretch!

I can't—I can't—I can't—say, my aunt was privy to it. She gave me good advice. She knew not for a great while, that I was—that I was—that I was—ugh!—ugh!—ugh!—

No more, no more, good Dorcas!—What a world we live in!—What a house am I in! But come, don't weep (tho' she herself could not forbear): My being betrayed into it, tho' to my own ruin, may be a happy event for thee: And, if I live, it shall.

I thank

I thank you, my good lady, blubbering. I am sorry, very sorry, you have had so hard a lot. But it may be the saving of my soul, if I can get to your ladyship's house.—Had I but known that your ladyship was not married, I would have eat my own flesh, before, before, before—

Dorcas sobb'd and wept. The lady sighed and wept also.

But now, Jack, for a serious reflection upon the premises.

How will the good folks account for it, that Satan has such faithful instruments, and that the bond of wickedness is a stronger bond, than the ties of virtue?—As if it were the nature of the human mind to be villainous. For here, had Dorcas been *good*, and tempted, as she was tempted, to any thing *evil*, I make no doubt, but she would have yielded to the temptation.

And cannot our fraternity, in an hundred instances, give proof of the like predominance of vice over virtue? And that we have risqued more to serve and promote the interests of the former, than ever a good man did to serve a good man, or a good cause? For have we not been prodigal of life and fortune? Have we not defied the civil magistrate upon occasion; and have we not attempted rescues, and dared all things, only to extricate a pounded profligate?—

Whence, Jack, can this be?

O I have it, I believe. The vicious are as bad as they can be; and do the devil's work without looking after; while he is continually spreading snares for the others; and, like a skilful angler, suitting his baits to the fish he angles for.

Nor let even *honest* people, *so called*, blame poor Dorcas for her fidelity in a bad cause. For does not the *General*, who implicitly serves an ambitious prince in his unjust designs upon his neighbours, or upon his own oppressed subjects; and even the *Lawyer*, who,

who, for the sake of a paltry fee, undertakes to whiten a black cause, and to defend it against one he knows to be good, do the very same thing as Dorcas? And are they not both every whit as culpable? Yet the one shall be dubbed a hero, the other a charming fellow, and be contended for by every client; and his double-paced abilities shall carry him thro' all the high preferments of the Law with reputation and applause.

Well but, what shall be done, since the lady is so much determined on removing?—Is there no way to oblige her, and yet to make the very act subservient to my own views?—I fancy such a way may be found out.

I will study for it—

Suppose I suffer her to make an escape? Her heart is in it. If she effect it, the triumph she will have over me upon it will be a counterbalance for all she has suffered.

I will oblige her if I can.

LETTER XL.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tired with a succession of fatiguing days and sleepless nights, and with contemplating the precarious situation I stand in with my Beloved, I fell into a profound reverie; which brought on sleep; and that produced a dream; a fortunate dream; which, as I imagine, will afford my working mind the means to effect the obliging double purpose my heart is now once more set upon.

What, as I have often contemplated, is the enjoyment of the finest woman in the world, to the contrivance, the bustle, the surprises, and at last the happy conclusion of a well-laid plot?—The charming roundabouts, to come the nearest way home;—

the doubts ; the apprehensions ; the heart-akings, the meditated triumphs.—These are the joys that make the blessing dear.—For all the rest, what is it ?—What but to find an angel in imagination dwindled down to a woman in fact ?—But to my dream—

Methought it was about nine on Wednesday morning, that a chariot, with a dowager's arms upon the doors, and in it a grave matronly lady [not unlike Mother H. in the face ; but in her heart O how unlike !], stopp'd at a grocer's shop, about ten doors on the other side of the way, in order to buy some groceries : And methought Dorcas, having been out to see if the coast were clear for her lady's flight, and if a coach were to be got near the place, espied this chariot with the dowager's arms, and this matronly lady : And what, methought, did Dorcas, that subtle traitress, do, but whip up to the old matronly lady, and, lifting up her voice, say, Good my Lady, permit me one word with your Ladyship.

What thou hast to say to me, say on, quoth the old lady ; the grocer retiring, and standing aloof, to give Dorcas leave to speak ; who, methought, in words like these, accosted the lady.

‘ You seem, Madam, to be a very good lady ;
 ‘ and here in this neighbourhood, at a house of no
 ‘ high repute, is an innocent lady of rank and for-
 ‘ tune, beautifull as a May morning, and youth-
 ‘ ful as a rose-bud, and full as sweet and lovely ;
 ‘ who has been trick'd thither by a wicked gentle-
 ‘ man, practised in the ways of the town ; and this
 ‘ very night will she be ruined, if she get not out
 ‘ of his hands. Now, O Lady ! if you will extend
 ‘ your compassionate goodness to this fair young lady,
 ‘ in whom, the moment you behold her, you will
 ‘ see cause to believe all I say ; and let her but have
 ‘ a place in your chariot, and remain in your pro-
 ‘ tection for one day only, till she can send a man

‘ and a horse to her rich and powerful friends ; you may save from ruin a lady, who has no equal for virtue as well as beauty.’

Methought the old lady, moved with Dorcas’s story, answered and said, ‘ Hasten, O damsel, who in a happy moment art come to put it in my power to serve the innocent and the virtuous, which it has always been my delight to do : Hasten to this young lady, and bid her hie hither to me with all speed ; and tell her, that my chariot shall be her asylum : And if I find all that thou sayest true, my house shall be her sanctuary, and I will protect her from all her oppressors.’

Hereupon, methought, this traitress Dorcas hied back to the lady, and made report of what she had done. And, methought, the lady highly approved of Dorcas’s proceeding, and blessed her for her good thought.

And I lifted up mine eyes, and behold the lady issued out of the house, and without looking back, ran to the chariot with the dowager’s coat upon it, and was received by the matronly lady with open arms, and ‘ Welcome, welcome, welcome, fair young lady, who so well answer the description of the faithful damsel : And I will carry you instantly to my house, where you shall meet with all the good usage your heart can wish for, till you can apprise your rich and powerful friends of your past dangers, and present escape.’

‘ Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, worthy, thrice worthy lady, who afford so kindly your protection to a most unhappy young creature, who has been basely seduced and betrayed, and brought to the very brink of destruction.’

Methought then, the matronly lady, who had by the time the young lady came to her, bought and paid for the goods she wanted, ordered her coachman to drive home with all speed ; who stopped not

till he had arrived in a certain street, not far from Lincolns-inn-fields, where the matronly lady lived in a sumptuous dwelling, replete with damsels who wrought curiously in muslins, cambricks, and fine linen, and in every good work that industrious damsels love to be employed about, except the loom and the spinning-wheel.

And methought, all the way the young lady and the old lady rode, and after they came in, till dinner was ready, the young lady filled up the time with the dismal account of her wrongs and her sufferings, the like of which was never heard by mortal ear; and this in so moving a manner, that the good old lady did nothing but weep, and sigh, and sob, and inveigh against the arts of wicked men, and against that abominable 'Squire Lovelace, who was a *plotting villain*, methought she said; and, more than that, an *unchained Beelzebub*.

Methought I was in a dreadful agony, when I found the lady had escaped; and in my wrath had like to have slain Dorcas, and our mother, and every one I met. But, by some quick transition, and strange metamorphosis, which dreams do not usually account for, methought, all of a sudden, this matronly lady was turned into the famous Mother H. herself; and, being an old acquaintance of Mother Sinclair, was prevailed upon to assist in my plot upon the young lady.

Then, methought, followed a strange scene; for, Mother H. longing to hear more of the young lady's story, and night being come, besought her to accept of a place in her own bed, in order to have all the talk to themselves. For, methought, two young nieces of hers had broken in upon them in the middle of the dismal tale.

Accordingly going early to bed, and the sad story being resumed, with as great earnestness on one side, as attention on the other, before the young lady had gone

gone far in it, Mother H. methought was taken with a fit of the colic ; and her tortures increasing, was obliged to rise, to get a cordial she used to find specific in this disorder, to which she was unhappily subject.

Having thus risen, and stept to her closet, methought she let fall the wax taper in her return ; and then [O metamorphosis still stranger than the former ! What unaccountable things are dreams !], coming to bed again in the dark, the young lady, to her infinite astonishment, grief, and surprize, found Mother H. turned into a young person of the other sex : And altho' Lovelace was the *abhorred of her soul*, yet, fearing it was some *other* person, it was matter of some consolation to her, when she found it was no other than himself, and that she had been still the bedfellow of but one and the same man.

A strange promiscuous huddle of adventures followed ; scenes perpetually shifting ; now nothing heard from the lady, but sighs, groans, exclamations, faintings, dyings.—From the gentleman, but vows, promises, protestations, disclaimers of purposes pursued ; and all the gentle and ungentle pressures of the lover's warfare.

Then, as quick as thought [for dreams, thou knowest, confine not themselves to the rules of the drama], ensued recoveries, lyings-in, christenings, the smiling boy, amply, even in *her own* opinion, rewarding the suffering mother.

Then the grandfather's estate yielded up, possession taken of it—Living very happily upon it :—Her beloved Norton her companion ; Miss Howe her visitor ; and (admirable ! thrice admirable !) enabled to *compare notes* with her ; a charming girl, by the same father, to her friend's charming boy ; who, as they grow up, in order to consolidate their mammas friendships [for neither have dreams regard to consanguinity], intermarry ; change names by act of

parliament, to enjoy my estate ;—and I know not what of the like incongruous stuff.

I awoke, as thou mayest believe, in great disorder, and rejoiced to find my charmer in the next room, and Dorcas honest.

Now thou wilt say, this was a very odd dream. And yet (for I am a strange dreamer) it is not altogether improbable, that something like it may happen; as the pretty simpleton has the weakness to confide in Dorcas, whom, till now, she disliked.

But I forgot to tell thee one part of my dream; and that was, That, the next morning, the lady gave way to such transports of grief and resentment, that she was with difficulty diverted from making an attempt upon her own life. But, however, at last, was prevailed upon to resolve to live, and to make the best of the matter. A letter, methought, from Capt. Tomlinson helping to pacify her, written to apprise me, that her uncle Harlowe would certainly be at Kentish-town on Wednesday night June 28. the following day, the 29th, being his anniversary birth-day; and he doubly desirous, on that account, that our nuptials should be then privately solemnized in his presence.

But is Thursday the 29th her uncle's anniversary, methinks thou askest?—It is; or else the day of celebration should have been earlier still. Three weeks ago I heard her say it was; and I have down the birth-day of every one of her family, and the wedding-day of her father and mother. The minutest circumstances are often of great service, in matters of the last importance.

And what sayest thou now to my dream?

Who says, that, sleeping and waking, I have not fine helps from some *body*, some *spirit* rather, as thou'l be apt to say?—But no wonder that a Beelzebub has his devilkins to attend his call.

I can have no manner of doubt of succeeding in
Mother

Mother H.'s part of the scheme ; for will the lady (who resolves to throw herself into the first house she can enter, or to bespeak the protection of the first person she meets ; and who thinks there can be no danger out of this house, equal to what she apprehends from Me in it) scruple to accept of the chariot of a dowerer, accidentally offering ? And the lady's protection engaged by her faithful Dorcas, so highly bribed to promote her escape ?—And then Mrs. H. has the air and appearance of a venerable matron, and is not such a forbidding devil as Mrs. Sinclair.

The pretty simpleton knows nothing of the world ; nor that people who have money never want assistants in their views, be they what they will. How else could the princes of the earth be so implicitly served as they are, change they hands ever so often, and be their purposes ever so wicked ?

If I can but get her to go on with me till Wednesday next week, we shall be settled together pretty quietly by that time. And indeed if she has any gratitude, and has in her the least of her sex's foibles, she must think I deserve her favour, by the pains she has cost me. For dearly do they all love, that men should take pains about them, and for them.

And here, for the present, I will lay down my pen, and congratulate myself upon my happy invention (since her obstinacy puts me once more upon exercising it).—But with this resolution, I think, That, if the present contrivance fail me, I will exert all the faculties of my mind, all my talents, to procure for myself a legal right to her favour, and that in defiance of all my antipathies to the married state ; and of the suggestions of the great devil out of the house, and of his secret agents in it.—Since, if now she is not to be prevailed upon, or drawn in, it will be in vain to attempt her further.

LETTER XLI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday night, June 20.

NO admittance yet to my charmer ! She is very ill — in a violent fever, Dorcas thinks. Yet will have no advice.

Dorcas tells her how much I am concerned at it.

But again let me ask, Does this lady do right to make herself ill, when she is *not* ill ? For my own part, libertine as people think me, when I had *occasion* to be sick, I took a dose of ipecacuanha, that I might not be guilty of a falsehood ; and most heartily sick was I ; as she, who then pitied me, full well knew. But here to pretend to be very ill, only to get an opportunity to run away, in order to avoid forgiving a man who has offended her, how unchristian ! — If good folks allow themselves in these breaches of a known duty, and in these presumptuous contrivances to deceive, who, Belford, shall blame us ?

I have a strange notion, that the matronly lady will be certainly at the grocer's shop at the hour of nine to-morrow morning : For Dorcas heard me tell Mrs. Sinclair, that I shall go out at eight precisely ; and then she is to try for a coach : And if the dowager's chariot should happen to be there, how lucky will it be for my charmer ! How strangely will my dream be made out !



I HAVE just received a letter from Captain Tomlinson. Is it not wonderful ! For that was part of my dream !

I shall always have a prodigious regard to dreams henceforward. I know not but I may write a book upon that subject ; for my own experience will furnish out a great part of it. *Glanville of Witches*, and *Baxter's*

Baxter's *History of Spirits and Apparitions*, and the Royal Insignificant's *Demonology*, will be nothing at all to Lovelace's *Resveries*.

The letter is just what I dream'd it to be. I am only concerned, that uncle John's anniversary did not happen three or four days sooner; for should any new misfortune befall my charmer, she may not be able to support her spirits so long, as till Thursday in the next week. Yet it will give me the more time for new expedients, should my present contrivance fail; which I cannot, however, suppose.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Dear Sir,

Monday, June 19.

I Can now return you joy, for the joy you have given me, as well as my dear friend Mr. Harlowe, in the news of his beloved niece's happy recovery; for he is determined to comply with her wishes, and yours, and to give her to you with his own hand.

As the ceremony has been necessarily delayed by reason of her illness, and as Mr. Harlowe's Birthday is on Thursday the 29th of this instant June, when he enters into the seventy-fourth year of his age; and as time may be wanted to complete the dear lady's recovery; he is very desirous, that the marriage shall be solemnized upon it; that he may afterwards have double joy on that day, to the end of his life.

For this purpose, he intends to set out privately, so as to be at Kentish-town on Wednesday se'nnight in the evening.

All the family used, he says, to meet to celebrate it with him; but as they are at present in too unhappy a situation for that, he will give out, that, not being able to bear the day at home, he has resolved to be absent for two or three days.

He will set out on horseback, attended only with one trusty servant, for the greater privacy. He will

be at the most creditable-looking public house there, expecting you both next morning, if he hear nothing from me to prevent him. And he will go to town with you after the ceremony is performed, in the coach he supposes you will come in.

He is very desirous, that I should be present on the occasion. But this I have promised him, at his request, that I will be up before the day, in order to see the settlements executed, and every thing properly prepared.

He is very glad that you have the licence ready.

He speaks very kindly of you, Mr. Lovelace; and says, that, if any of the family stand out after he has seen the ceremony performed, he will separate from them, and unite himself to his dear niece and her interests.

I owned to you, when in town, that I took slight notice to my dear friend of the misunderstanding between you and his niece; and that I did this, for fear the lady should have shewn any little discontent in his presence, were I to have been able to prevail upon him to go up in person, as then was doubtful. But I hope nothing of that discontent remains now.

My absence, when your messenger came, must excuse me for not writing by him.

Be pleased to make my most respectful compliments acceptable to the admirable lady, and believe me to be

Your most faithful and obedient servant,
ANTONY TOMLINSON.

This letter I sealed, and broke open. It was brought, thou mayst suppose, by a particular messenger; the seal such a one as the writer need not be ashamed of. I took care to inquire after the Captain's health, in my Beloved's hearing; and it is now ready to be produced, as a pacifier, according as she shall take on, or resent, if the two metamorphoses happen

happen pursuant to my wonderful dream; as, having great faith in dreams, I dare say they will.—I think it will not be amiss in changing my cloaths, to have this letter of the worthy Captain lie in my Beloved's way.

LETTER XLII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wedn. Noon, June 21.

WHAT shall I say now!—I who but a few hours ago had such faith in dreams, and had proposed out of hand to begin my treatise of *Dreams-sleeping* and *Dreams-waking*, and was pleasing myself with the dialoguings between the old matronly lady, and the young lady; and with the two metamorphoses (absolutely assured that every thing would happen as my dream chalked it out); shall never more depend upon those flying follies, those illusions of a fancy depraved, and run mad.

Thus confoundedly have matters happened.

I went out at eight o'clock in high good humour with myself, in order to give the sought-for opportunity to the plotting mistress and corrupted maid; only ordering Will. to keep a good look-out, for fear his lady should mistrust my plot, or mistake a hackney-coach for the dowager-lady's chariot. But first I sent to know how she did; and received for answer, Very ill:—Had a very bad night: Which latter was but too probable: Since This I know, that people who have plots in their heads as seldom have as deserve good ones.

I desired a physician might be called in; but was refused.

I took a walk in St. James's park, congratulating myself all the way on my rare inventions: Then, impatient, I took coach, with one of the windows quite up, the other almost up, playing at bo-peep at every

chariot I saw pass in my way to Lincolns-inn-fields : And, when arrived there, I sent the coachman to desire any one of Mother H.'s family to come to me to the coach-side, not doubting but I should have intelligence of my fair fugitive there ; it being then half an hour after ten.

A servant came to me, who gave me to understand, that the matronly lady was just returned by herself in the chariot.

Frighted out of my wits, I alighted, and heard from the Mother's own mouth, that Dorcas had engaged her to protect the lady ; but came to tell her afterwards, that she had changed her mind, and would not quit the house.

Quite astonish'd, not knowing what might have happen'd, I order'd the coachman to lash away to our mother's.

Arriving here in an instant, the first word I ask'd, was, If the lady were safe (*a*) ?

(*a*) Mr. Lovelace gives here a very circumstantial relation of all that passed between the Lady and Dorcas. But as he could only guess at her motives for refusing to go off, when Dorcas told her, that she had engaged for her the protection of the dowager lady, it is thought proper to omit his relation, and to supply it by some *memoranda* of the Lady's. But it is first necessary to account for the occasion on which those *memoranda* were made.

The reader may remember, that in the letter wrote to Miss Howe on her escape to Hamstead (*b*), she promises to give her the particulars of her flight at leisure.

She had indeed thoughts of continuing her account of every thing that had passed between her and Mr. Lovelace, since her last narrative letter. But the uncertainty she was in from that time, with the execrable treatment she met with on her being deluded back again ; followed by a week's delirium ; had hitherto hindered her from prosecuting her intention. But, nevertheless, having it still in her view to perform her promise, as soon as she had opportunity, she made minutes of every thing as it passed, in order to help her memory :-- Which, as she observes, in one place, she could less trust to since her late disorders than before.

In these minutes, or book of *memoranda*, she observes, " That having apprehensions, that Dorcas might be a traitress, she would have got away while she was gone out to see for a coach ; and actually slid down stairs with that intent. But that, seeing Mrs. Sinclair in the entry : [whom

(*b*) See Vol. iv. p. 352.

[whom Dorcas had planted there while she went out), 'she speeded up again, unseen.'

She then went up to the dining-room, and saw the letter of Captain Tomlinson: On which she observes in her memorandum-book, as follows.

" How am I puzzled now! --- He might leave this letter on purpose; " None of the other papers left with it being of any consequence: --- " What's the alternative? --- To stay, and be the wife of the vilest of " men --- How my heart resists that! --- To attempt to get off, and fail, " ruin inevitable! --- Dorcas *may* betray me! --- I doubt she is *still* his " implement! --- At his going out, he whisper'd her, as I saw, unob- " served --- In a very familiar manner too --- Never fear, Sir, with a " courtesy.

" In her agreeing to connive at my escape, she provided not for her " own safety, if I got away! Yet had reason, in that case, to expect " his vengeance; and wants not forethought. --- To have taken her " *with me*, was to be in the power of her intelligence, if a faithless " creature. --- Let me, however, tho' I part not with my caution, keep " my charity! --- Can there be any woman so vile to woman? --- O yes! " --- Mrs. Sinclair: Her aunt. --- The Lord deliver me! --- But, alas! " I have put myself out of the course of his protection by the *natural* " means --- And am already ruin'd! --- A father's curse likewise against " me! --- Having made vain all my friends cautions and solicitudes, I " must not hope for miracles in my favour!

" If I do escape, what may become of me, a poor, helpless, deserted " creature! --- Helpless from sex! --- From circumstances! --- Exposed to " every danger! --- Lord protect me!

" His vile man not gone with him! --- Lurking hereabouts, no doubt; " to watch my steps! --- I *will* not go away by the chariot, however.



" That this chariot should come so opportunely! --- So like his many " *opportunities*! --- That Dorcas should have the sudden thought! --- " Should have the *courage* with the thought, to address a lady in be- " half of an absolute stranger to that lady! --- That the lady should so " readily consent! --- Yet the transaction between them to take up so " much time; their distance in degree consider'd: For, arduous as the " case was, and precious as the time, Dorcas was gone above half an " hour! Yet the chariot was said to be ready at a grocer's not many doors off!

" Indeed some elderly ladies are talkative: And there are, no doubt, " some good people in the world ---

" But that it should chance to be a widow lady, who could do what " she pleased: That Dorcas should know her to be so, by the Lozenge! " Persons in her station not usually so knowing, I believe, in heraldry.

" Yet some may! --- For servants are fond of deriving *collateral* ho- " nours and distinctions, as I may call them, from the quality, or people " of rank, whom they serve.

" But his fly servant not gone with him! --- Then this letter of Tom- " linson's! ---

" Altho' I am resolved never to have this wretch, yet, may I not " throw myself into my uncle's protection at Kentish-Town or Highbury, if " I cannot escape before; and so get clear of him? --- May not the evil " I know, be less than what I may fall into, if I can avoid further vil- " lainy?

" lainy? --- Further villainy he has not yet threatened---freely and
" justly as I have treated him! --- I will not go, I think. At least,
" unless I can send this fellow out of the way (a).

" The fellow a villain! The wench, I doubt, a vile wench. At last
concerned for her own safety. Plays off and on about a coach.

" All my hopes of getting off, at present, over! --- Unhappy creature!
" ---to what further evils art thou reserved!--O how my heart rises,
" at the necessity I must still be under to see and converse with so very
" vile a man!"

LETTER XLIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wednesday afternoon.

Disappointed in her meditated escape;—obliged, against her will, to meet me in the dining-room;—and perhaps apprehensive of being upbraided for her art in feigning herself ill; I expected that the dear perverse would begin with me with spirit and indignation. But I was in hopes, from the gentleness of her natural disposition, from the consideration which I expected from her, on her situation on the letter of Captain Tomlinson, which Dorcas told me she had seen, and from the time she had had to cool and reflect, since she last admitted me to her presence, that she would not have carried it so strongly thro', as she did.

As I enter'd the dining-room, I congratulated her and myself upon her sudden recovery. And would have taken her hand, with an air of respectful tenderness. But she was resolved to begin where she left off.

She turned from me, drawing in her hand, with a repulsing and indignant aspect—I meet you once more, said she, because I cannot help it. What

(a) She tried to do this; but was prevented by the fellow's pretending to put his uncle out, by a slip down stairs.—"A trick," says his contriving master, in his omitted relation, "I had learned him, on a like occasion, at Amiens."

have

have you to say to me? Why am I to be thus detained against my will?

With the utmost solemnity of speech and behaviour, I urged the ceremony. I saw I had nothing else for it.—I had a letter in my pocket, I said (feeling for it, altho' I had not taken it from the table where I left it, and which we were then near), the contents of which, if attended to, would make us both happy. I had been loth to shew it to her before, because I hoped to prevail upon her to be mine sooner than the day mentioned in it.

I felt for it in all my pockets, watching her eye mean time, which I saw glance towards the table where it lay.

I was uneasy that I could not find it—At last, directed again by her fly eye, I spied it on the table at the further end of the room.

With joy I fetch'd it. Be pleased to read that letter, Madam, with an air of satisfied assurance.

She took it, and cast her eye over it, in such a careless way, as made it evident, that she had read it before: And then unthankfully toss'd it into the window-seat before her.

I urged her to bless me to-morrow, or Friday morning: At least, that she would not render vain her uncle's journey, and kind endeavours to bring about a reconciliation among us all.

Among us all, repeated she, with an air equally disdainful and incredulous. O Lovelace, thou art surely nearly allied to the grand deceiver, in thy endeavour to suit temptations to inclinations!—But what honour, what faith, what veracity, were it possible that I could enter into parley with thee on this subject, which it is not, may I expect from such a man as thou hast shewn thyself to be?

I was touch'd to the quick. A lady of your perfect character, Madam, who has feign'd herself sick, on purpose to avoid seeing the man who adored her, should—

I know what thou wouldest say, interrupted she!— Twenty and twenty low things, that my soul would have been above being guilty of, and which I have despised myself for, have I been brought into by the infection of thy company, and by the necessity thou hast laid me under, of appearing mean. But I thank God, destitute as I am, that I am not, however, sunk so low, as to wish to be thine.

I, Madam, as the injurer, *ought* to have patience. It is for the injured to reproach. But your uncle is not in a plot against you, it is to be hoped. There are circumstances in the letter you have cast your eyes over—

Again she interrupted me, Why, once more I ask thee, am I detained in this house?—Do I not see myself surrounded by wretches, who, tho' they wear the habit of my sex, may yet, as far as I know, lie in wait for my perdition?

She would be very loth, I said, that Mrs. Sinclair and her nieces should be called up to vindicate themselves, and their house.

Would but they kill me, let them come, and welcome. I will bless the hand that will strike the blow; indeed I will.

'Tis idle, very idle, to talk of dying. Mere young-lady talk, when controvuled by those they hate.—But let me beseech you, dearest creature—

Beseech me nothing. Let me not be detained thus against my will!—Unhappy creature, that I am, said she, in a kind of phrensy, wringing her hands at the same time, and turning from me, her eyes lifted up! Thy curse, O my cruel father, seems to be now in the height of its operation!—I am in the way of being a lost creature as to both worlds! Blessed, blessed God, said she, falling on her knees, save me, O save me from myself, and from this man!

I sunk down on my knees by her, excessively affected.—O that I could recall yesterday!—Forgive me!

me ! my dearest creature, forgive what is past, as it cannot now but by one way be retrieved. Forgive me only on this condition—That my future faith and honour—

She interrupted me, rising—If you mean to beg of me, Never to seek to avenge myself by Law, or by an appeal to my relations, to my cousin Morden in particular, when he comes to England—

D—n the Law, rising also [She started], and all those to whom you talk of appealing ! —I defy both the one and the other—All I beg, is YOUR forgiveness ; and that you will, on my unfeigned contrition, re-establish me in your favour—

O no, no, no ! lifting up her clasped hands, I never, never *will*, never, never *can* forgive you !—And it is a punishment worse than death to me, that I am obliged to meet you, or to see you !

This is the last time, my dearest life, that you will ever see me in this posture, on this occasion : And again I kneeled to her.—Let me hope, that you will be mine next Thursday, your uncle's birth-day, if not before. Would to Heaven I had never been a villain ! Your indignation is not, cannot be, greater than my remorse—and I took hold of her gown ; for she was going from me.

Be remorse thy portion !—For thy own sake, be remorse thy portion ! —I never, never will forgive thee !—I never, never will be thine !—Let me retire !—Why kneelest thou to the wretch whom thou hast so vilely humbled ?

Say but, dearest creature, you will *consider*—Say but you will take time to reflect upon what the honour of both our families require of you. I will not rise. I will not permit you to withdraw (still holding her gown), till you tell me you will *consider*.—Take this letter. Weigh well *your* situation, and *mine*. Say you will withdraw to *consider* ; and then I will not presume to with-hold you.

Com-

Compulsion shall do nothing with me. Tho' a slave, a prisoner, in circumstance, I am no slave in my will!—Nothing will I promise thee—With-held, compell'd—Nothing will I promise thee—

Noble creature!—But not implacable, I hope!—Promise me but to return in an hour!—

Nothing will I promise thee!—

Say but you will see me again this evening!

O that I could say—that it were in my power to say—I never will see thee more!—Would to Heaven I never were to see thee more!

Passionate beauty—still holding her—

I speak, tho' with vehemence, the deliberate wish of my heart.—O that I could avoid looking down upon thee, mean groveler, and abject as insulting---Let me withdraw! My soul is in tumults! Let me withdraw!

I quitted my hold to clasp my hands together---Withdraw, O sovereigns of my fate!—Withdraw, if you will withdraw!—My destiny is in your power!—It depends upon your breath!—Your scorn but augments my love!—Your resentment is but too well founded!—But, dearest creature, return, return, with a resolution to bless with pardon and peace your faithful adorer!

She flew from me. As soon as she found her wings, the angel flew from me. I, the reptile kneeler, the despicable slave, no more the proud victor, arose; and, retiring, tried to comfort myself, that, circumstanced as she is, destitute of friends and fortune; her uncle moreover, who is to reconcile all so soon, (as, I thank my stars, she still believes), expected.—

O that she would forgive me!—Would she but generously forgive me, and receive my vows at the altar, at the instant of her forgiving me, that I might not have time to relapse into my old prejudices!—By my soul, Belford, this dear girl gives the lye to all our rakish maxims. There must be something more than

than a name in virtue! --- I now see that there is! --- Once subdued, always subdued --- 'Tis an egregious falsehood! --- But Oh, Jack, she never was subdued. What have I obtained, but an increase of shame and confusion! --- While her glory has been established by her sufferings!

This one merit is, however, left me, that I have laid all her sex under obligations to me, by putting this noble creature to trials, which, so gloriously supported, have done honour to them all.

But yet—But no more will I add---What a force have evil habits---I will take an airing, and try to fly from myself---Do not thou upbraid me on my weak fits---On my contradictory purposes---On my irresolution---And all will be well.

LETTER XLIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wednesday night.

A Man is just now arrived from M. Hall, who tells me, that my Lord is in a very dangerous way. The gout in his stomach to an extreme degree, occasion'd by drinking a great quantity of limonade.

A man of 8000*l.* a year to prefer his appetite to his health! --- He deserves to die! --- But we have all of us our inordinate passions to gratify! --- And they generally bring their punishment along with them. --- So witnesses the nephew, as well as the uncle.

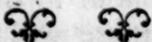
The fellow was sent up on other business; but stretched his orders a little, to make his court to a successor.

I am glad I was not at M. Hall, at the time my Lord took the grateful dose [It was certainly grateful to him at the time]: There are people in the world, who would have had the wickedness to say, that I had persuaded him to drink it.

The man says, that his Lordship was so bad when he

he came away, that the family began to talk of sending for me, in post-haste. As I know the old peer has a good deal of cash by him, of which he seldom keeps account, it behoves me to go down as soon as I can. But what shall I do with this dear creature the while? --- To-morrow over, I shall, perhaps, be able to answer my own question. --- I am afraid she will make me desperate.

For here have I sent to implore her company, and am denied with scorn.



I HAVE been so happy as to receive, this moment, a third letter from my dear correspondent Miss Howe. A little severe devil! --- It would have broke the heart of my Beloved, had it fallen into her hands. I will inclose a copy of it. Read it here.

My dearest Miss Harlowe,

Tuesday, June 20.

AGAIN I venture to write to you (almost against inclination); and that by your former conveyance, little as I like it.

I know not how it is with you. It may be bad; and then it would be hard to upbraid you, for a silence you may not be able to help. But if not, what shall I say severe enough, that you have not answered either of my last letters? The first (*a*) of which (and I think it importuned you too much to be silent upon it) you owned the receipt of. The other, which was delivered into your own hands (*b*), was so pressing for the favour of a line from you, that I am amazed I could not be obliged. — And still more, that I have not heard from you since.

The fellow made so strange a story of the condition he saw you in, and of your speech to him, that I know not what to conclude from it: Only, that he is a simple, blundering, and yet conceited fellow, who aiming at description, and the rustic wonderful, gives an air of bumkinly romance to all he tells. That this is his character, you will believe, when you are informed, that he described

you

(*a*) Vol. iv. p. 328. (*b*) See p. 183 of this Volume.

you in grief excessive (*c*), yet so improved in your person and features, and so *rosy*, that was his word, in your face, and so flush-colour'd, and so plump in your arms, that one would conclude you were labouring under the operation of some malignant poison; and so much the rather, as he was introduced to you, when you were upon a couch, from which you offer'd not to rise, or sit up.

Upon my word, Miss Harlowe, I am greatly distressed upon your account; for I must be so free as to say, that, in your ready return with your deceiver, you have not at all answer'd my expectations, nor acted up to your own character: For Mrs. Townsend tells me, from the women at Hamstead, how chearfully you put yourself into his hands again: Yet, at the time, it was impossible you should be married!

Lord, my dear, what pity it is, that you took so much pains to get from the man! But you know best!—Sometimes I think it could not be *you* to whom the rustic deliver'd my letter. But it must too: Yet it is strange I could not have one line by him:—Not one:—And you so soon well enough to go with him back again!

I am not sure, that the letter I am now writing will come to your hands: So shall not say half that I have upon my mind to say. But if you think it *worth your while* to write to me, pray let me know, what fine ladies, his relations, those were, who visited you at Hamstead, and carried you back again so joyfully, to a place that I had so fully warn'd you — But I will say no more: At least till I *know* more: For I can do nothing but wonder, and stand amazed!

Notwithstanding all the man's baseness, 'tis plain, there was more than a lurking love—Good God!—But I have done!—Yet I know not how to have done, neither!—Yet I must—I *will*.

Only account to me, my dear, for what I cannot at all account for: And inform me, whether you are really married, or not.—And then I shall know, Whether there *must*, or must *not*, be a period shorter than that of one of our lives, to a friendship which has hitherto been the pride and boast of

Your ANNA HOWE.

(c) See p. 178 to 181 of this Volume,

DORCAS

DORCAS tells me, that she has just now had a searching conversation, as she calls it, with her lady. She is willing, she tells the wench, still to place a confidence in her. Dorcas hopes she has re-assured her; but wishes me not to depend upon it. Yet Captain Tomlinson's letter must assuredly weigh with her. I sent it in just now by Dorcas, desiring her to re-peruse it. And it was not returned me, as I feared it would be. And that's a good sign, I think.

I say, *I think*, and *I think*; for this charming creature, intangled as I am in my own inventions, puzzles me ten thousand times more than I her.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BBLFORD, Esq;

Thursday noon, June 22.

LE T me perish, if I know what to make either of myself, or of this surprising creature — Now calm, now tempestuous — But I know thou lovest not anticipation any more than me.

At my repeated requests, she met me at six this morning. She was ready dressed; for she has not had her cloaths off ever since she declared, that they never more should be off in this house. And charmingly she looked, with all the disadvantages of a three hours violent stomach-ach (for Dorcas told me, that she had been really ill), no rest, and eyes red, and swell'd with weeping. Strange to me, that those charming fountains have not been long ago exhausted. But she is a woman. And I believe anatomists allow, *that women have more watry heads than men.*

Well, my dearest creature, I hope you have now thoroughly consider'd of the contents of Captain Tomlinson's letter. But as we are thus early met, let me beseech you to make this my happy day.

She looked not favourably upon me. A cloud hung upon her brow at her entrance: But as she was going

to answer me, a still greater solemnity took possession of her charming features.

Your air, and your countenance, my beloved creature, are not propitious to me. Let me beg of you, before you speak, to forbear all further recriminations. For already I have such a sense of my vileness to you, that I know not how to bear the reproaches of my own mind.

I have been endeavouring, said she, since I am not permitted to avoid you, after a composure which I never more expected to see you in. How long I may enjoy it, I cannot tell. But I hope I shall be enabled to speak to you without that vehemence which I expressed yesterday, and could not help it (*a*).

After a pause (for I was all attention) thus she proceeded.

It easy for me, Mr. Lovelace, to see, that further violences are intended me, if I comply not with your purposes, whatever they are. I will suppose them to be what you so solemnly profess they are. But I have told you as solemnly my mind, that I never *will*, that I never *can*, be yours; nor, if so, any man's upon earth. All vengeance, nevertheless, for the wrongs you have done me, I disclaim. I want but to slide into some obscure corner, to hide myself from you, and from every one, who once loved me. The desire lately so near my heart, of a reconciliation with my friends, is much abated. They shall not receive me *now*, if they *would*. Sunk in my own eyes, I now think myself unworthy of their favour. In the anguish of my soul, therefore, I conjure you, Lovelace (tears in her eyes), to leave me to my fate. In

doing

(*a*) The Lady, in her minutes, says, "I fear Dorcas is a false one. " May I not be able to prevail upon him to leave me at my liberty? " Better to try, than to trust to her. If I cannot prevail, but must meet him and my uncle, I hope I shall have fortitude enough to renounce him then. But I would fain avoid qualifying with the wretch, or to give him an expectation which I intend not to answer. " If I am mistress of my own resolutions, my uncle himself shall not prevail with me to bind my soul in covenant with so vile a man."

doing so, you will give me a pleasure, the highest I now can know.

Whither, my dearest life—

No matter whither. I will leave to Providence, when I am out of this house, the direction of my future steps. I am sensible enough of my destitute condition. I know, that I have not now a friend in the world. Even Miss Howe has given me up—or you are—But I would fain keep my temper! — By your means I have lost them all—And you have been a barbarous enemy to me. You know you have.

She paused.

I could not speak.

The evils I have suffered, proceeded she (turning from me), however irreparable, are but *temporary* evils —Leave me to my hopes of being enabled to obtain the Divine forgiveness, for the offence I have been drawn in to give to my parents, and to virtue; that so I may avoid the evils that are *more than temporary*. This is in now all I have to wish for. And what is it that I demand, that I have not a right to, and from which it is an illegal violence to with-hold me?

It was impossible for me, I told her plainly, to comply. I besought her to give me her hand as this very day. I could not live without her. I communicated to her my Lord's illness, as a reason why I wish'd not to stay for her uncle's anniversary. I besought her to bless me with her consent; and, after the ceremony was passed, to accompany me down to Berks. And thus, my dearest life, said I, will you be freed from a house, to which you have conceived so great an antipathy.

This, thou wilt own, was a princely offer. And I was resolved to be as good as my word. I thought I had kill'd my Conscience, as I told thee, Belford, some time ago. But Conscience, I find, tho' it may be temporarily stifled, cannot die; and when it dare not speak aloud, will whisper. And at this instant,

I thought I felt the revived varletess (on but a slight retrograde motion), writhing round my pericardium like a serpent ; and, in the action of a dying one (collecting all its force into its head), fix its plaguy fangs into my heart.

She hesitated, and looked down, as if irresolute. And this set my heart up at my mouth. And, believe me, I had instantly popt in upon me, in imagination, an old spectacled parson, with a white surplice thrown over a black habit (A fit emblem of the halcyon office, which, under a benign appearance, often introduces a life of storms and tempests), whining and snuffing thro' his nose the irrevocable ceremony.

I hope now, my dear life, said I, snatching her hand, and pressing it to my lips, that your silence bodes me good. Let me, my beloved creature, have but your tacit consent this moment, to step out, and engage a minister—And then I promised how much my whole future life should be devoted to her commands, and that I would make her the best and tene-
dereft of husbands.

At last, turning to me, I have told you my mind, Mr. Lovelace, said she. Think you, that I could thus solemnly—There she stopt—I am too much in your power, proceeded she ; Your prisoner, rather than a person free to choose for myself, or to say what I will *do* or *be*.—But, as a testimony that you mean me well, let me instantly quit this house ; and I will then give you such an answer in writing, as best befits my unhappy circumstances.

And imaginest thou, fairest, thought I, that this will go down with a Lovelace ? Thou oughtest to have known, that free-livers, like ministers of state, never part with a power put into their hands, without an equivalent of twice the value.

I pleaded, that if we joined hands *this morning* (if not, *to-morrow* ; if not, on *Thursday*, her uncle's birth-day, and in his presence) ; and afterwards, as I

had proposed, set out for Berks; we should, of course, quit this house; and, on our return to town, should have in readiness the house I was in treaty for.

She answer'd me not, but with tears and sighs: *Fond of believing what I hoped*, I imputed her silence to the modesty of her sex. The dear creature, thought I, solemnly as she began with me, is ruminating, in a sweet suspense, how to put into fit words the gentle purposes of her condescending heart. But, looking in her averted face with a soothing gentleness, I plainly perceived, that it was resentment, and not bashfulness, that was struggling in her bosom (*a*).

At last, she broke silence—I have no patience, said she, to find myself a slave, a prisoner, in a vile house—Tell me, Sir, in so many words tell me, Whether it be, or be not, your intention to permit me to quit it?—To permit me the freedom which is my birthright as an English subject?

Will not the consequence of your departure hence be, that I shall lose you for ever, Madam?—And can I bear the thoughts of that?

She flung from me—My soul despairs to hold parley with thee, were her violent words—But I threw myself at her feet, and took hold of her reluctant hand, and began to imprecate, to vow, to promise—But thus the passionate Beauty, interrupting me, went on:

I am sick of thee, MAN!—One continued string of vows, oaths, and protestations, varied only by time and place, fill thy mouth!—Why detainest thou me? My heart rises against thee, O thou cruel implement of my brother's causeless vengeance—All I beg of thee is, that thou wilt remit me the future part of my father's dreadful curse! The temporary part, base and ingrateful as thou art! thou hast completed!

I was speechless!—Well I might!—Her brother's implement!

(*a*) The Lady, in her minutes, owns the difficulty she lay under to keep her temper in this conference. “ But when I found, says she, “ that all my intreaties were ineffectual, and that he was resolved to detain me, I could no longer with-hold my impatience.”

implement!—James Harlowe's implement!—Zounds, Jack! what words were these!

I let go her struggling hand. She took two or three turns cross the room, her whole haughty soul in her air—Then approaching me, but in silence, turning from me, and again to me, in a milder voice—I see thy confusion, Lovelace. Or is it thy remorse?—I have but one request to make thee.—The request so often repeated—That thou wilt this moment permit me to quit this house. Adieu then, let me say, for ever adieu! And mayst thou enjoy that happiness in this world, which thou hast robbed me of; as thou hast of every friend I have in it!

And saying this, away she flung, leaving me in a confusion so great, that I knew not what to think, say, or do.

But Dorcas soon roused me—Do you know, Sir, running in hastily, that my lady is gone down stairs!

No, sure!—And down I flew, and found her once more at the street-door, contending with Polly Horton to get out.

She rushed by me into the fore-parlour, and flew to the window, and attempted once more to throw up the sash—Good people! Good people! cried she.

I caught her in my arms, and lifted her from the window. But being afraid of hurting the charming creature (charming in her very rage), she slid thro' my arms on the floor;—Let me die here! Let me die here! were her words; remaining jointless and immovable till Sally and Mrs. Sinclair hurried in.

She was visibly terrified at the sight of the old wretch; while I, sincerely affected, appealed, Bear witness, Mrs. Sinclair!—Bear witness, Miss Martin!—Miss Horton!—Every one bear witness, that I offer not violence to this beloved creature!

She then found her feet—O house (looking towards the windows, and all round her, O house) contrived on purpose for my ruin! said she—But let not

that woman come into my presence—Nor that Miss Horton neither, who would not have dared to controul me, had she not been a base one!

Hoh, Sir! Hoh, Madam! vociferated the old creature, her arms kemboed, and flourishing with one foot to the extent of her petticoats—What ado's here about nothing!—I never knew such work in my life, betwen a chicken of a gentleman, and a tyger of a lady!—

She was visibly affrighted: And up stairs she hasten'd. A bad woman is certainly, Jack, more terrible to her own sex, than even a bad man.

I follow'd her up. She rushed by her own apartment into the dining-room: No terror can make her forget her punctilio.

To recite what passed there of invective, exclamations, threatenings, even of her own life, on one side; of expostulations, supplications, and sometimes menaces, on the other, would be too affecting; and, after my particularity in like scenes, these things may as well be imagined as expressed.

I will therefore only mention, that, at length, I extorted a concession from her. She had reason (a) to think it would have been worse for her on the spot, if she had not made it. It was, *That she would endeavour to make herself easy, till she saw what next Thursday, her uncle's birth-day, would produce.* But O that it were not a sin, she passionately exclaimed, on making this poor concession, to put an end to her own life, rather than yield to give me but *that assurance!*

This,

(a) The Lady mentions, in her memorandum-book, that she had no other way, as she apprehended, to save herself from instant dishonour, but by making this concession. Her only hope, now, she says, if she cannot escape by Dorcas's connivance (whom, nevertheless, she suspects), is, to find a way to engage the protection of her uncle, and even of the civil magistrate, on Thursday next, if necessary. “He shall see, she says, tame and timid as he has thought her, what she dare to do, to avoid so hated a compulsion; and a man capable of baseness so premeditatedly vile and inhuman.”

This, however, shews me, that she is aware, that the reluctantly-given assurance may be fairly construed into a matrimonial expectation on my side. And if she will now, even now, look forward, I think, from my heart, that I will put on her livery, and wear it for life.

What a situation am I in, with all my cursed inventions? I am puzzled, confounded, and ashamed of myself, upon the whole. To take such pains to be a villain!—But (for the fiftieth time) let me ask thee, Who would have thought, that there had been such a woman in the world?—Nevertheless, she had best take care, that she carries not her obstinacy much further. She knows not what revenge for slighted love will make me do.

The busy scenes I have just passed thro', have given emotions to my heart, which will not be quieted one while. My heart, I see (on reperusing what I have written), has communicated its tremors to my fingers; and in some places the characters are so indistinct and unformed, that thou'l hardly be able to make them out. But if one half of them only are intelligible, that will be enough to expose me to thy contempt, for the wretched hand I have made of my plots and contrivances.—But surely, Jack, I have gained some ground by this promise.

And now, one word to the assurances thou sendest me, that thou hast not betrayed my secrets in relation to this charming creature. Thou mightest have spared them, Belford. My suspicions held no longer than while I wrote about them (a). For well I knew, when I allowed myself time to think, that thou hadst no *principles*, no *virtue*, to be misled by. A great deal of strong envy, and a little of weak pity, I knew to be thy motives. Thou couldst not provoke my anger, and my compassion thou ever hadst; and art

(a) See p. 258. of this Volume.

now more especially intitled to it ; because thou art a
pitiful fellow.

All thy new expostulations in my Beloved's be-
half, I will answer when I see thee.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq.

Thursday night.

COnfoundedly out of humour with this perverse lady. Nor wilt thou blame me, if thou art my friend. She regards the concession she made, as a concession extorted from her : And we are but just where we were before she made it.

With great difficulty I prevailed upon her to favour me with her company for one half-hour this evening. The necessity I was under to go down to M. Hall, was the subject I wanted to talk to her upon.

I told her, that as she had been so good as to promise, that she would endeavour to make herself easy till she saw the Thursday in next week over,—I hoped, that she would not scruple to oblige me with her word, that I should find her here, at my return from M. Hall.

Indeed she would make me no such promise. Nothing of *this house* was mentioned to me, said she : You know it was not. And do you think that I would have given *my consent to my imprisonment in it* ?

I was plaguely nettled, and disappointed too. If I go not down to M. Hall, Madam, you'll have no scruple to stay here, I suppose, till Thursday is over?

If I cannot help myself, I must.—But I insist upon being permitted to go out of this house, whether you leave it, or not.

Well, Madam, then I will comply with your commands. And I will go out this very evening, in quest of lodgings that you shall have no objection to.

I will have no lodgings of your providing, Sir—I will go to Mrs. Moore's at Hamstead.

Mrs.

Mrs. Moore's, Madam?—I have no objection to Mrs. Moore's.—But will you give me your promise, to admit me there to your presence?

As I do here—When I cannot help it.

Very well, Madam—Will you be so good, as to let me know, what you intended by your promise to make yourself easy—

To endeavour, Sir, to make myself easy—were the words—

—Till you saw what next Thursday would produce?

Ask me no questions that may infuse me. I am too sincere for the company I am in.

Let me ask you, Madam, What meant you, when you said, “that, were it not a sin, you would die before you gave me that assurance?”

She was indignantly silent.

You thought, Madam, you had given me room to hope your pardon by it?

When I think I ought to answer you with patience, I will speak.

Do you think yourself in my power, Madam?

If I were not—And there she stopt—

Dearest creature, speak out—I beseech you, dearest creature, speak out.—

She was silent; her charming face all in a glow.

Have you, Madam, any reliance upon my honour?

Still silent.

You hate me, Madam. You despise me more than you do the most odious of God's creatures.

You ought to despise me, if I did not.

You say, Madam, you are in a bad house. You have no reliance upon my honour—You believe you cannot avoid me—

She arose. I beseech you, let me withdraw.

I snatch'd her hand, rising, and press'd it first to my lips, and then to my heart, in wild disorder. She might have felt the bounding mischief ready to burst its bars—You shall go—To your own apartment, if

you please—But, by the great God of Heaven, I will accompany you thither.

She trembled—Pray, pray, Mr. Lovelace, don't terrify me so!

Be seated, Madam! I beseech you be seated!—

I will sit down—

Do then, Madam—Do then—All my soul in my eyes, and my heart's blood throbbing at my fingers ends.

I will—I will—You hurt me—Pray, Mr. Lovelace, don't—don't frighten me so—And down she sat, trembling; my hand still grasping hers.

I hung over her throbbing bosom, and putting my other arm round her waist—And you say, you hate me, Madam—And you say, you despise me!—And you say, you promised me nothing—

Yes, yes, I did promise you—Let me not be held down thus—You see I sat down when you bid me—Why (struggling) need you hold me down thus?—I did promise to endeavour to be easy till Thursday was over! But you won't let me!—How can I be easy?—Pray, let me not be thus terrified.

And what, Madam, meant you by your promise? Did you mean any-thing in my favour?—You designed, that I should, at the time, *think* you did. Did you mean any thing in my favour, Madam?—Did you intend, that I should *think* you did?

Let go my hand, Sir—Take away your arm from about me, struggling, yet trembling—*Why do you gaze upon me so?*

Answer me, Madam—Did you mean any thing in my favour by your promise?

Let me not be thus constrained to answer.

Then pausing, and gaining more spirit, Let me go, said she: I am but a woman—but a weak woman—But my life is in my own power, tho' my person is not—I will not be thus constrained.

You shall not, Madam, quitting her hand, bowing,

ing, but my heart at my mouth, and hoping farther provocation.

She arose, and was hurrying away.

I pursue you not, Madam—I will try your generosity—Stop—Return.—This moment stop, return, if, Madam, you would not make me desperate.

She stopt at the door; burst into tears—O Lovelace!—How, how, have I deserved—

Be pleased, dearest angel, to return.

She came back—But with declared reluctance; and imputing her compliance to terror.

Terror, Jack, as I have heretofore found out, tho' I have so little benefited by the discovery, must be my resort, if she make it necessary — Nothing else will do with the inflexible charmer.

She seated herself over-against me; extremely discomposed.—But indignation had a visible predominance in her features.

I was going towards her, with a countenance intendedly changed to love and softness: Sweetest, dearest angel, were my words, in the tenderest accent:—But, rising up, she insisted upon my being seated at distance from her.

I obeyed—and begged her hand over the table, to my extended hand; to see, as I said, if in any thing she would oblige me — But nothing gentle, soft, or affectionate would do. She refused me her hand!—Was she wise, Jack, to confirm to me, that nothing but terror would do?

Let me only know, Madam, if your promise to endeavour to wait with patience the event of next Thursday, meant me favour?

Do you expect any voluntary favour from one to whom you give not a free choice?

Do you intend, Madam, to honour me with your hand, in your uncle's presence, or do you not?

My heart and my hand shall never be separated.

Why, think you, did I stand in opposition to the will of my best my natural friends?

I know what you mean, Madam—Am I then as hateful to you as the vile Solmes?

Ask me not such a question, Mr. Lovelace.

I must be answered. Am I as hateful to you, as the vile Solmes?

Why do you call Mr. Solmes vile?

Don't you think him so, Madam?

Why should I? Did Mr. Solmes ever do vilely by me?

Dearest creature! don't distract me by hateful comparisons! And perhaps by a more hateful preference.

Don't you, Sir, put questions to me, that you know I will answer truly, tho' my answer were ever so much to enrage you.

My heart, Madam, my soul is all yours at present. But you must give me hope, that your promise, in your own construction, binds you, no new cause to the contrary, to be mine on Thursday. How else can I leave you?

Let me go to Hamstead; and trust to my favour.

May I trust to it?—Say, only, *May* I trust to it?

How will you trust to it, if you extort an answer to this question?

Say only, dearest creature, say only, *may* I trust to your favour, if you go to Hamstead?

How dare you, Sir, if I must speak out, expect a promise of favour from me?—What a mean creature must you think me, after your ingrateful baseness to me, were I to give you such a promise?

Then standing up, Thou hast made me, O vilest of men! (her hands clasped, and a face crimsoned over with indignation) an inmate of the vilest of houses—Nevertheless, while I am in it, I shall have a heart incapable of any thing but abhorrence of that and of thee!

And

And round her looked the angel, and upon me, with fear in her sweet aspect of the consequence of her free declaration.—But what a devil must I have been, I, who love bravery in a man, had I not been more struck with admiration of her fortitude at the instant, than stimulated by revenge?

Noblest of creatures! — And do you think I can leave you, and my interest in such an excellence, precarious? No promise! — No hope! — If you make me not desperate, may lightning blast me, if I do you not all the justice 'tis in my power to do you!

If you have any intention to oblige me, leave me at my own liberty, and let me not be detained in this abominable house. To be constrained as I have been constrained! To be stopt by your vile agents! To be brought up by force, and to be bruised, in my own defence against such illegal violence! — I dare to die, Lovelace — And the person that fears not death is not to be intimidated into a meanness unworthy of her heart and principles!

Wonderful creature! But why, Madam, did you lead me to hope for something favourable for next Thursday? — Once more, make me not desperate — With all your magnanimity, glorious creature! [I was more than half frantic, Belford]. You *may*, you *may* — But do not, do not make me brutally threaten you! — Do not, do not make me desperate!

My aspect, I believe, threatened still more than my words. I was rising — She arose — Mr. Lovelace, be pacified — You are even more dreadful than the Lovelace I have long dreaded — Let me retire — I ask your *leave* to retire — You really frighten me — Yet I give you no hope — From my heart I ab—

Say not, Madam, you *abhor* me — You *must*, for your own sake, conceal your hatred — At least not avow it. — I seized her hand.

Let me retire — Let me retire, said she — in a manner out of breath.

I will only say, Madam, that I refer myself to your generosity. My heart is not to be trusted at this instant. As a mark of my submission to your will, you shall, *if you please*, withdraw.—But I will not go to M. Hall—Live or die my uncle, I will not go to M. Hall.—But will attend the effect of your promise. Remember, Madam, you have promised *to endeavour to make yourself easy, till you see the event of next Thursday*—Next Thursday, remember, your uncle comes up, to see us married.—*That's the event*—You think ill of your Lovelace—Do not, Madam, suffer your own morals to be degraded by the *infession*, as you called it, of his example.

Away flew the charmer, with this half-permission—And no doubt thought, that she had an escape—or without reason.

I knew not for half an hour what to do with myself. Vexed at the heart, nevertheless, now she was from me, when I reflected upon her hatred of me, and her defiance, that I suffered myself to be so over-awed, checked, restrained—

And now I have written thus far (having of course recollected the whole of our conversation), I am more and more incensed against myself.

But I will go down to these women—and perhaps suffer myself to be laugh'd at by them.

Devil fetch them, they pretend to know their own sex. Sally was a woman well educated—Polly also—Both have read—Both have sense—Of parentage not contemptible—Once modest both—Still they say had been modest, but for me—Not intirely indelicate now; tho' too little nice for my *personal* intimacy, loth as they both are to have me think so.—The old one, too, a woman of family, tho' thus (from bad inclination, as well as at first from low circumstances) miserably funk:—And hence they all pretend to remember what *once* they were; and vouch for the inclinations

clinations and hypocrisy of the whole sex ; and wish for nothing so ardently, as that I will leave the perverse lady to their management, while I am gone to Berkshire ; undertaking absolutely for her humility and passiveness on my return ; and continually boasting of the many perverse creatures whom they have obliged to draw in their traces.

They often upbraidingly tell me, that they are sure I shall marry at last :—And Sally, the last time I was with her, had the confidence to hint, that, when a wife, some other person would not find half the difficulty, that I had found.—Confidence, indeed ! But yet I must say, That this dear creature is the only woman in the world, of whom I should not be jealous. And yet, if a man gives himself up to the company of these devils, they never let him rest, till he either suspect or hate his wife.

But a word or two of other matters, if possible.

Methinks, I long to know how causes go at M. Hall. I have another private intimation, that the old Peer is in the greatest danger.

I must go down. Yet what to do with this lady the mean while !—These cursed women are full of cruelty and enterprize. She will never be easy with them in my absence. They will have provocation and pretence therefore. But woe be to them, if—

Yet what will vengeance do, after an insult committed ? The two nymphs will have jealous rage to goad them on—And what will with-hold a jealous and already-ruined woman ?

To let her go elsewhere ; that cannot be done. I am still resolved to be honest, if she'll give me hope : If yet she'll *let me* be honest — But I'll see how she'll be, after the contention she will certainly have between her resentment, and the terror she had reason for, from our last conversation.—So let this subject rest till the morning. And to the old Peer once more.

I shall have a good deal of trouble, I reckon, tho' no sordid man, to be decent on the expected occasion. Then how to act (I who am no hypocrite) in the days of condolement! What farces have I to go through; and to be a principal actor in them—I'll try to think of my own latter end; a grey beard, and a graceless heir; in order to make me serious.

Thou, Belford, knowest a good deal of this sort of grimace; and canst help a gay heart to a little of the dismal. But then every feature of thy face is cut out for it. My heart may be touched, perhaps, sooner than thine; for, believe me, or not, I have a very tender one:—But then, no man looking in my face, be the occasion for grief ever so great, will believe *that* heart to be deeply distressed.

All is placid, easy, serene, in my countenance. Sorrow cannot sit half an hour together upon it. Nay, I believe, that Lord M.'s recovery, should it happen, would not affect me above a quarter of an hour. Only the new scenery (and the pleasure of aping an Heraclitus to the family, while I am a Democritus among my private friends), or I want nothing that the old Peer can leave me. Wherefore then should grief sadden and distort such blythe, such jocund features as mine?

But as for thine, were there murder committed in the street, and thou wert but passing by, the murderer even in sight, the pursuers would quit *him*, and lay hold of *thee*: And thy very looks would hang, as well as apprehend, thee.

But one word to business, Jack. Whom dealtest thou with for thy blacks?—Wert thou well used?—I shall want a plaguy parcel of them. For I intend to make every soul of the family mourn—*Outside*, if not *In*.—

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

June 23. Friday morning.

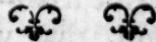
I Went out early this morning, on a design that I know not yet whether I shall or shall not pursue; and on my return found Simon Parsons, my Lord's Berkshire Bailiff (just before arrived), waiting for me with a message in form, sent by all the family, to press me to go down, and that at my Lord's particular desire; who wants to see me before he dies.

Simon has brought my Lord's chariot-and-six (perhaps *my own* by this time), to carry me down. I have ordered it to be in readiness by four to-morrow morning. The cattle shall smoke for the delay; and by the rest they'll have in the interim, will be better able to bear it.

I am still resolved upon matrimony, if my fair Perverse will accept of me. But, if she will not—why then I must give an uninterrupted hearing, not to my conscience, but to these women below.

Dorcas had acquainted her lady with Simon's arrival and errand. My Beloved had desired to see him. But my coming in prevented his attendance on her, just as Dorcas was instructing him what questions he should not answer to, that might be asked of him.

I am to be admitted to her presence immediately, at my repeated request—Surely the acquisition in view will help me to make all up with her—She is just gone up to the dining-room.



NOTHING will do, Jack!—I can procure no favour from her, tho' she has obtained from me the point which she had set her heart upon.

I will give thee a brief account of what passed between us.

I first proposed instant marriage; and this in the most fervent manner; But was denied as fervently.

Would

Would she be pleased to assure me, that she would stay here only till Tuesday morning? I would but just go down, and see how my Lord was—To know whether he had any thing particular to say, or injoin me, while yet he was sensible, as he was very earnest to see me—Perhaps I might be up on Sunday—Concede in something! — I beseech you, Madam, shew me some little consideration.

Why, Mr. Lovelace, must I be determined by your motions?—Think you, that I will voluntarily give a sanction to the imprisonment of my person? Of what importance to me ought to be your stay or your return?

Give a sanction to the imprisonment of your person!
Do you think, Madam, that I fear the Law?—

I might have spared this foolish question of defiance—But my pride would not let me. I thought she threatened me, Jack.

I don't think so, Sir — You are too brave to have any regard either to moral or divine sanctions.

'Tis well, Madam! — But ask me any thing I can do to oblige *you*; and I will oblige you, tho' in nothing will you oblige *me*.

Then I ask you, then I request of you, to let me go to Hamstead.

I paused — and at last — By my soul you shall — This very moment I will wait upon you, and see you fixed there, if you'll promise me your hand on Thursday, in presence of your uncle.

I want not *you* to see me fixed—I will promise nothing.

Take care, Madam, that you don't let me see, that I can have no reliance upon your future favour.

I have been used to be threatened by you, Sir— But I will accept of your company to Hamstead—I will be ready to go in a quarter of an hour—My cloaths may be sent after me.

You know the condition, Madam—Next Thursday.

You dare not trust—

My

My infinite demerits tell me, that I ought not— Nevertheless I will confide in your generosity—To-morrow morning (no new cause arising to give reason to the contrary), as early as you please, you may go to Hamstead.

This seemed to oblige her. But yet she looked with a face of doubt.

I will go down to the women. And having no better judges at hand, will hear what they say upon my critical situation with this proud beauty, who has so insolently rejected a Lovelace kneeling at her feet, tho' making an earnest tender of himself for a husband, in spite of all his prejudices to the state of shackles.

LETTER XLVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

JUST come from the women.

' Have I gone so far, and am I afraid to go farther?—Have I not already, as it is evident by her behaviour, sinned beyond forgiveness?—A woman's tears used to be to me but as water sprinkled on a glowing fire, which gives it a fiercer and brighter blaze: What defence has this lady, but her tears and her eloquence? She was before taken at no weak advantage. She was *insensible* in her moments of trial. Had she been sensible, she must have been sensible. So they say. The methods taken with her have augmented her glory and her pride. She has now a tale to tell, that she may tell, with honour to herself. No accomplice-inclination. She can look me into confusion, without being conscious of so much as a thought, which she need to be ashamed of.'

This, Jack, the substance of my conference with the women.

To which let me add, that the dear creature now sees the necessity I am in to leave her. Detecting me is.

is in her head. My contrivances are of such a nature, that I must appear to be the most odious of men, if I am detected on this side matrimony. And yet I have promised as thou seest, that she shall set out to Hamstead, as soon as she pleases in the morning, and that without condition on her side.

Dost thou ask, What I meant by this promise?

No *new cause* arising, was the proviso on my side, thou'lt remember. But there *will be* a new cause.

Suppose Dorcas should drop the promissory-note given her by her lady? Servants, especially those who cannot read or write, are the most careless people in the world of written papers. Suppose I take it up? — At a time, too, that I was determined that the dear creature should be her own mistress? — Will not this detection be a *new cause*? — A cause that will carry against her the appearance of ingratitude with it?

That she designed it a *secret from me*, argues a *fear of detection*, and indirectly a *sense of guilt*. I wanted a pretence. Can I have a better? If I am in a violent passion upon the detection, is not passion an universally allowed extenuator of violence? — Is not every man and woman obliged to excuse that fault in another, which at times they find attended with such ungovernable effects in themselves?

The mother and sisterhood, suppose, brought to sit in judgment upon the vile corrupted? — The least benefit that must accrue from the accidental discovery, if not a pretence for *perpetration* (which, however, may be the case), an excuse for renewing my orders for her detention till my return from M. Hall (the fault her own); and for keeping a stricter watch over her than before; with direction to send me any letters that may be written by her or to her. — And when I return, the devil's in it if I find not a way to make her choose lodgings for herself (since these are so hateful to her), that shall answer all my purposes; and

and yet no more appear to direct her choice, than I did before in these.

Thou wilt curse me, when thou comest to this place. I know thou wilt. But thinkest thou, that, after such a series of contrivance, I will lose this imitable woman, for want of a little more? A Rake's a Rake, Jack!—And what Rake is with-held by principle from the perpetration of any evil his heart is set upon, and in which he thinks he can succeed?—Besides, am I not in earnest as to marriage?—Will not the generality of the world acquit me, if I do marry? And what is that injury which a church-rite will at any time repair? Is not the catastrophe of every story that ends in wedlock accounted happy, be the difficulties in the progress to it ever so great?

But here, how am I engrossed by this lady, while poor Lord M. as Simon tells me, lies groaning in the dreadfulest agonies?—What must he suffer!—Heaven relieve him!—I have a too compassionate heart. And so would the dear creature have found, could I have thought the worst of her sufferings equal to the lightest of his. I mean as to fact; for, as to that part of hers, which arises from extreme sensibility, I know nothing of that; and cannot therefore be answerable for it.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

JUST come from my charmer. She will not suffer me to say half the obliging, the tender things, which my honest heart is ready to overflow with. A confounded situation, that, when a man finds himself in humour to be eloquent, and pathetic at the same time, yet cannot engage the mistress of his fate to lend an ear to his fine speeches.

I can account now, how it comes about, that lovers, when their mistresses are cruel, run into solitude,

tude, and disburthen their minds to stocks and stones: For am I not forced to make my complaints to thee?

She claimed the performance of my promise, the moment she saw me, of permitting her (haughtily she spoke the word) to go to Hamstead, as soon as I were gone to Berks.

Most chearfully I renewed it.

She desired me to give orders in her hearing.

I sent for Dorcas, and Will. They came.—Do you both take notice (But, perhaps, Sir, I may take you with me), that your lady is to be obeyed in all her commands. She purposes to return to Hamstead as soon as I am gone—My dear, will you not have a servant to attend you?

I shall want no servant there.

Will you take Dorcas?

If I should want Dorcas, I can send for her.

Dorcas could not but say, She should be very proud—

Well, well, that may be at my return, if your lady permit—Shall I, my dear, call up Mrs. Sinclair, and give her orders to the same effect, in your hearing?

I desire not to see Mrs. Sinclair; nor any that belong to her.

As you please, Madam.

And then (the servants being withdrawn) I urged her again for the assurance, that she would meet me at the altar on Thursday next. But to no purpose. May she not thank herself for all that may follow?

One favour, however, I would not be denied; to be admitted to pass the evening with her.

All sweetness and obsequiousnes will I be on this occasion. My whole soul shall be poured out to move her to forgive me. If she will not, and if the promisory-note should fall in my way, my revenge will, doubtles, take total possession of me.

All the house in my interest, and every one in it

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not only engaging to intimidate, and assist, as occasion shall offer, but staking all their experience upon my success, if it be not my own fault, what must be the consequence ?

This, Jack, however, shall be her last trial ; and if she behave as nobly *in* and *after* this *second* attempt (*all her senses about her*), as she has done after the *first*, she will come out an angel upon full proof, in spite of man, woman, and devil : Then shall there be an end of all her sufferings. I will then renounce that yanquished devil, and reform. And if any vile machination start up, presuming to mislead me, I will sooner stab it in my heart, as it rises, than give way to it.

A few hours will now decide all. But whatever be the event, I shall be too busy to write again, till I get to M. Hall.

Mean time I am in strange agitations. I must suppress them, if possible, before I venture into her presence—My heart bounces my bosom from the table. I will lay down my pen, and wholly resign to its impulses.

LETTER L.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Frid. Night, or rather Sat. Morn. 1 o'Clock.

I thought I should not have had either time or inclination to write another line before I got to M. Hall. But have the first ; must find the last ; since I can neither sleep, nor do any thing but write, if I can do that. I am most *confoundedly* out of humour. The reason let it follow ; if it will follow — No preparation for it, from me.

I tried by gentleness and love to soften—What?—Marble. A heart incapable either of love or gentleness. Her past injuries for ever in her head. Ready to receive a favour ; the permission to go to Hamstead ;

stead ; but neither to deserve it, nor return any. So my scheme of the gentle kind, was soon given over.

I then wanted her to provoke me : Like a coward boy, who waits for the first blow, before he can persuade himself to fight, I half challeng'd her to challenge or defy me : She seemed aware of her danger ; and would not directly brave my resentment : But kept such a middle course, that I neither could find a pretence to offend, nor reason to hope ; yet she believed my tale, that her uncle would come to Kentish Town ; and seemed not to apprehend, that Tomlinson was an impostor.

She was very uneasy, upon the whole, in my company : Wanted often to break from me : Yet so held me to my promise of permitting her to go to Hamstead, that I knew not how to get off of it ; altho' it was impossible, in my precarious situation with her, to think of performing it.

In this situation ; the women ready to assist ; and, if I proceeded not, as ready to ridicule me ; what had I left me, but to pursue the concerted scheme, and seek a pretence to quarrel with her, in order to revoke my promised permission ; and to convince her, that I would not be upbraided as the most brutal of ravishers for nothing ?

I had agreed with the women, that if I could not find a pretence in her presence to begin my operations, the note should lie in my way, and I was to pick it up, soon after her retiring from me. But I began to doubt at near ten o'clock (so earnest was she to leave me, suspecting my over-warm behaviour to her, and eager grasping of her hand two or three times, with eye-strings, as I felt, on the strain, while her eyes shewed uneasiness and apprehension), that if she actually retired for the night, it might be a chance, whether it would be easy to come at her again. Loth therefore to run such a risque, I slept

out

out at a little after ten, with intent to alter the pre-concerted disposition a little ; saying I would attend her again instantly. But as I returned, I met her at the door, intending to withdraw for the night. I could not persuade her to go back : Nor had I presence of mind (so full of complaisancy as I was to her just before) to stay her by force : So she slid thro' my hands into her own apartment. I had nothing to do, therefore, but to let my former concert take place.

I should have premised (but care not for order of time, connexion, or any thing else) that, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, another servant of Lord M.'s, on horseback, came, to desire me to carry down with me Dr. S. my uncle having been once (*in extremis*, as they judge he is now) relieved and reprieved by him. I sent, and engaged the Doctor to accompany me down ; and am to call upon him by four this morning : Or the devil should have uncle and doctor, if I'd stir, till I got all made up.

Poke thy damn'd nose forward into the event, if thou wilt— Curse me, if thou shalt have it, till its proper time and place— And too soon then.

She had hardly got into her chamber, but I found a little paper, as I was going into mine ; which I took up ; and, opening it (for it was carefully pinn'd in another paper), what should it be, but a promissory note, given as a bribe, with a further promise of a diamond ring, to induce Dorcas to favour her mistress's escape ?

How my temper chang'd in a moment !—Ring, ring, ring, ring, my bell, with a violence enough to break the string, and as if the house were on fire.

Every devil frightened into active life : The whole house in an uproar : Up runs Will.—Sir—Sir—Sir ! —Eyes goggling, mouth distended—Bid the damn'd toad

toad Dorcas come hither (as I stood at the stair-head), in a horrible rage, and out of breath, cry'd I.

In sight came the trembling devil—but standing aloof, from the report made her by Will. of the passion I was in, as well as from what she heard.

Flash came out my sword immedately; for I had it ready on—Curs'd, confounded, villainous, bribery and corruption!—

Up runs she to her lady's door, screaming out for safety and protection.

Good your honour, interposed Will. for God's sake—O Lord, O Lord!—receiving a good cuff.—

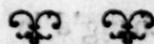
Take that, varlet, for saving the ingrateful *wretch* from my vengeance!—

Wretch! I intended to say; but if it were some other word of like ending, passion must be my excuse.

Up ran two or three of the sisterhood, What's the matter! What's the matter!

The matter! (for still my beloved opened not her door; on the contrary, drew another bolt) This *abominable* Dorcas!—(Call her aunt up!—Let her see what a traitress she has placed about me!—And let her bring the toad to answer for herself)—has taken a bribe, a provision for life, to betray her trust; by that means to perpetuate a quarrel between a man and his wife, and frustrate for ever all hopes of reconciliation between us!

Let me perish, Belford, if I have patience to proceed with the farce!



UP came the aunt puffing and blowing!—As she hoped for mercy, she was not privy to it!—She never knew such a plotting perverse lady in her life!—Well might servants be at the pass they were, when such ladies as Mrs. Lovelace made no conscience of corrupting them. For her part, she desired no mercy for

for the wretch : No niece of hers, if she were not faithful to her trust !—But what was the proof ?—

She was shewn the paper—

But too evident !—Cursed, cursed Toad, Devil, Jade, passed from each mouth :—And the vileness of the *corrupted*, and the unworthiness of the *corruptress*, were inveighed against.

Up we all went, passing the lady's door into the dining-room, to proceed to tryal—

Stamp, stamp, stamp up, each on her heels ; Rave, rave, rave, every tongue !—

Bring up the creature before us all, this instant !—

And would she have got out of the house, say you !—

These the noises, and the speeches, as we clatter'd by the door of the fair briberess.—

Up was brought Dorcas (whimpering) between two, both bawling out—You must go ! You shall go !—'Tis fit you should answer for yourself !—You are a discredit to all worthy servants !—as they pulled and pushed her up stairs.—She whining, I cannot see his honour !—I cannot look so good and so generous a gentleman in the face !—O how shall I bear my aunt's ravings !—

Come up, and be d—n'd—Bring her forward, her imperial judge !—What a plague, it is the *detection*, not the *crime*, that confounds you. You could be quiet enough for days together, as I see by the date, under the villainy. Tell me, ingrateful devil, tell me, who made the first advances.

Ay, disgrace to my family and blood, cry'd the old one !—Tell his Honour ! Tell the truth ;—Who made the first advances !—

Ay, cursed creature, cry'd Sally, Who made the first advances ?

I have betrayed one trust already !—O let me not betray another !—My lady is a good lady !—O let not *her* suffer !—

Tell all you know. Tell the whole truth, Dorcas,

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cry'd

cry'd Polly Horton—His Honour loves his lady too well; to make her suffer *much*; little as she requites his love!—

Every-body sees that, cry'd Sally—Too well indeed, for his Honour, I was going to say.

Till now, I thought she deserved my love! But to bribe a servant thus, whom she supposed had orders to watch her steps, for fear of another elopement; and to impute that precaution to me as a crime!— Yet I must love her!—Ladies, forgive my weakness!—

Curse upon my grimaces!—If I have patience to repeat them!—But thou shalt have them all—Thou canst not despise me more than I despise myself!—



BUT suppose, Sir, said Sally, you have my lady and the wench face to face? You see she cares not to confess.

O my *carelessness*! cry'd Dorcas—Don't let my poor lady suffer!—Indeed if you all knew what I know, you would say, Her ladyship has been cruelly treated—

See!—See!—See!—repeatedly, every one at once—Only sorry for the *detection*, as your Honour said—Not the *fault*—

Cursed creature, and devilish creature, from every mouth.

Your lady *won't*, she *dare* not come out to save you, cry'd Sally, tho' it is more his Honour's mercy, than your desert, if he does not cut your vile throat, this instant.

Say, repeated Polly, was it your lady, that made the first advances, or was it you, you creature?—

If the lady has so much honour, bawl'd the mother, excuse me, So—Excuse me, Sir—[Confound the old wretch! she had like to have said Son!]—If the lady has so much honour, as we have supposed, she will appear to vindicate a poor servant, smiled, as she has been, by such large promises!—

But

But I hope, Sir, you will do them *both* justice ; I hope you will !—Good luck ! Good luck ! clapping her hands together, to grant her every thing she could ask : To indulge her in her unworthy hatred to my poor innocent house ! To let her go to Hamstead, tho' your Honour told us, you could get no condescension from her ; no, not the least !—O Sir—O Sir—I hope—I hope—If your lady will not come out—I hope, you will find a way to hear this cause in her presence. I value not my doors, on such an occasion as this. Justice I ever loved. I desire you will come at the bottom of it, in *clearance* to me !—I'll be sworn I had no privity in this black corruption.

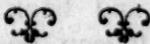
Just then, we heard the lady's door unbar, unlock, unbolt—

Now, Sir !

Now, Mr. Lovelace.

Now, Sir ! from every encouraging mouth !—

But, O Jack ! Jack ! Jack ! I can write no more !



If you must have it all, you must !

Now, Belford, see us all sitting in judgment, resolved to punish the fair briberess—I, and the mother, the hitherto *dreaded* mother, the nieces Sally, Polly, the traitress Dorcas, and Mabell, a guard, as it were, over her, that she might not run away, and hide herself :—All pre-determined, and of *necessity* pre-determined, from the journey I was going to take, and my precarious situation with her :—And hear her unbolt, unlock, unbar, the door ; then, as it proved afterwards, put the key into the lock on the outside, lock the door, and put it in her pocket ; Will. I knew, below, who would give me notice, if, while we were all above, she should mistake her way, and go down stairs, instead of coming into the dining-room ; the street-doors also doubly secured, and every

shutter to the windows round the house fastened, that no noise or screaming should be heard [Such was the brutal preparation]—And then hear her step towards us, and instantly see her enter among us, confiding in her own innocence ; and with a majesty in her person and manner, that is *natural* to her ; but which then shone out in all its glory !—Every tongue silent, every eye awed, every heart quaking, mine, in a particular manner, sunk, throbleſs, and twice below its usual region, to once at my throat : —A shameful recreant !—She silent too, looking round her, first on me ; then on the mother, as no longer fearing her ; then on Sally, Polly ; and the culprit Dorcas !—Such the glorious power of innocence exerted at that awful moment !

She would have spoken, but could not, looking down my guilt into confusion : A mouse might have been heard passing over the floor, her own light feet and rustling silks could not have prevented it ; for she seemed to tread air, and to be all soul -- She passed to the door, and back towards me, two or three times, before speech could get the better of indignation, and at last, after twice or thrice hemming, to recover her articulate voice --- O thou contemptible and abandoned Lovelace, thinkest thou that I see not thro' this poor villainous plot of thine, and of these thy wicked accomplices ?

Thou woman, looking at the mother, once my terror ! always my dislike ! but now my detestation ! shouldest once more (for thine perhaps was the preparation) have provided for me intoxicating potions, to rob me of my senses---

And then, *turning to me*, Thou, wretch, mightest more securely have depended upon such a low contrivance as this ! ---

And ye, vile women, who perhaps have been the ruin, body and soul, of hundreds of innocents (you shew me how, in full assembly), know, that I am not

not married, --- ruined as I am, by your helps, I bless God, I am *not* married, to this miscreant --- And I have friends that will demand my honour at your hands ! --- And to whose authority I will apply ; for none has this man over me. Look to it then, what further insults you offer me, or incite him to offer me. I am a person, tho' thus vilely betrayed, of rank and fortune. I never will be his ; and, to your utter ruin, will find friends to pursue you : And now I have this full proof of your detestable wickedness, and have heard your base incitements, will have no mercy upon you ! ---

They could not laugh at the poor figure I made. --- Lord ! how every devil, conscience-shaken, trembled ! ---

What a dejection must ever fall to the lot of guilt, were it given to innocence always thus to exert itself ! ---

And as for thee, thou vile Dorcas ! --- Thou *double* deceiver ! --- whining out thy pretended love for me ! --- Begone, wretch ! --- Nobody will hurt thee ! --- Begone, I say ! --- Thou hast too well acted thy part to be blamed by *any* here but myself --- Thou art safe : Thy guilt is thy security in such a house as this ! --- Thy shameful, thy poor part, thou hast as well acted, as the low farce coul^l give thee to act ! --- As well as they each of them (thy superiors, tho' not thy betters), thou seest, can act theirs. --- Steal away into darkness ! No inquiry after this will be made, whose the first advances, thine or mine.

And, as I hope to live, the wench, confoundedly frightened, flunk away ; so did her centinel Mabell ; tho' I, endeavouring to rally, cried out for Dorcas to stay : But I believe the devil could not have stopt her, when an angel bid her begone.

Madam, said I, let me tell you ; and was advancing towards her, with a fierce aspect, most cur-sedly vexed and ashamed too ---

But she turned to me ; Stop where thou art, O vilest and most abandoned of men ! --- Stop where thou art ! --- Nor, with that determined face, offer to touch me, if thou wouldest not that I should be a corpse at thy feet !

To my astonishment, she held forth a penknife in her hand, the point to her own bosom, grasping resolutely the whole handle, so, that there was no offering to take it from her.

I offer not mischief to any-body but myself. You, Sir, and ye women, are safe from every violence of mine. The LAW shall be all my resource : The LAW, and she spoke the word with emphasis, that to such people carries natural terror with it, and now struck a panic into them.

No wonder, since those who will damn themselves to procure ease and plenty in this world, will tremble at every thing that seems to threaten their methods of obtaining that ease and plenty. ---

The LAW only shall be my refuge ! ---

The infamous mother whispered me, that it were better to *make terms* with this *strange* lady, and let her go.

Sally, notwithstanding all her impudent bravery at other times, said, *If* Mr. Lovelace had told *them* what was *not true* of her being his wife ---

And Polly Horton : That she must *needs* say, the lady, if she were *not* my wife, had been very much injured ; that was all.

That is not now a matter to be disputed, cried I : You and I know, Madam ---

We do so, said she ; and I thank God, I am *not* thine : --- *Once more*, I thank God for it ! I have no doubt of the further baseness that thou hadst intended me, by this vile and low trick : But I have my SENSES, Lovelace : And from my heart I despise thee, thou very poor Lovelace ! How canst thou stand in my presence ! --- Thou, that ---

Madam,

Madam, Madam, Madam — These are insults not to be borne --- And was approaching her. She withdrew to the door, and set her back against it, holding the pointed knife to her heaving bosom ; while the women held me, beseeching me not to provoke the violent Lady — For their house sake, and be curs'd to them, they besought me --- and all three hung upon me --- While the truly heroic lady braved me, at that distance :

Approach me, Lovelace, with resentment, if thou wilt. I dare die. It is in defence of my honour. God will be merciful to my poor soul ! --- I expect no mercy from thee ! I have gained this distance, and two steps nearer me, and thou shalt see what I dare do ! ---

Leave me, women, to myself, and to my angel ! --- They retired at a distance --- O my beloved creature, how you terrify me ! --- Holding out my arms, and kneeling on one knee --- Not a step, not a step further, except to receive the death myself at that injured hand that threatens its own.—I am a villain ! the blackest of villains ! -- Say you will sheath your knife in the injurer's, not the injured's, heart ; and then will I indeed approach you, but not else.

The mother twang'd her damn'd nose ; and Sally and Polly pulled out their handkerchiefs, and turned from us. They never in their lives, they told me afterwards, beheld such a scene —

Innocence so triumphant : Villainy so debased, they must mean !

Unawares to myself, I had moved onward to my angel --- And dost thou, dost thou, *still* disclaiming, *still* advancing --- Dost thou, dost thou, *still* insidiously move towards me ; and her hand was extended --- I dare --- I dare --- Not rashly neither --- My heart from principle abhors the act, which thou makest necessary ! --- God, in thy mercy ! --- Lifting up her eyes, and hands --- God, in thy mercy ! ---

I threw myself to the further end of the room. An ejaculation, a silent ejaculation, employing her thoughts that moment ; Polly says the whites of her lovely eyes were only visible : And, in the instant that she extended her hand, *affuredly* to strike the fatal blow [How the very recital tumults me !], she cast her eye towards me, and saw me at the utmost distance the room would allow, and heard my broken voice [My voice was utterly broken ; nor knew I what I said, or whether to the purpose or not] : And her charming cheeks, that were all in a glow before, turned pale, as if terrified at her own purpose ; and lifting up her eyes—Thank God !—Thank God ! said the angel — Deliver'd *for the present* ; for the *present* deliver'd from myself.—Keep, Sir, keep that distance (looking down towards me, who was prostrate on the floor, my heart pierced, as with an hundred daggers !) : That distance has saved a life ; to what reserved, the Almighty only knows !—

To be happy, Madam ; and to *make* happy !—And O let me but hope for your favour for to-morrow—I will put off my journey till then—And may God—

Swear not, Sir !—With an awful and piercing aspect— You have too-too often sworn !—God's eye is upon us !—His more *immediate* eye ; and looked wildly.— But the women looked up to the ceiling, and trembled, as if *afraid* of God's eye. And well they might ; and I too, who so very lately had each of us the devil in our hearts.

If not to-morrow, Madam, say but next Thursday, your uncle's birth-day ; say but next Thursday !—

This I say, of This you may assure yourself, I never, never *will* be yours.—And let me hope, that I may be intitled to the performance of your promise, to permit me to leave this *innocent* house, as one called

it

it (but long have my ears been accustomed to such inversions of words), as soon as the day breaks.

Did my perdition depend upon it, that you cannot, Madam, but upon terms. And I hope you will not terrify me—Still dreading the accursed knife.

Nothing less than an attempt upon my honour shall make me desperate.—I have no view, but to defend my honour: With such a view only I entered into treaty with your infamous agent below. The resolution you have seen, I trust, God will give me again upon the same occasion. But for a *less*, I wish not for it. Only take notice, women, that I am no wife of *this man*: Basely as he has used me, I am not his wife. He has no authority over me. If he go away by-and-by, and you act by his authority to detain me, look to it.

Then, taking one of the lights, she turned from us; and away she went, unmolested.—Not a soul was *able* to molest her.

Mabell saw her, tremblingly, and in a hurry, take the key of her chamber-door out of her pocket, and unlock it; and, as soon as she entered, heard her, double-lock, bar, and bolt it.

By her taking out her key, when she came out of her chamber to us, she no doubt suspected my design: Which was, to have carried her in my arms thither, if she made such force necessary, after I had intimidated her, and to have been her companion for that night.

She was to have had several bedchamber-women to assist to undress her upon occasion: But, from the moment she entered the dining-room with so much intrepidity, it was absolutely impossible to think of prosecuting my villainous designs against her.



THIS, This, Belford, was the hand I made of a

contrivance I expected so much from! --- And now am I ten times worse off than before!

Thou never sawest people in thy life look so like fools upon one another, as the mother, her partners, and I, did for a few minutes. And at last, the two devilish nymphs broke out into insulting ridicule upon me; while the old wretch was concerned for her house, the reputation of her house. I cursed them all together; and, retiring to my chamber, locked myself in.

And now it is time to set out: All I have gained, detection, disgrace, fresh guilt by repeated perjuries, and to be despised by her I doat upon; and, what is still worse to a proud heart, by myself.

Success, success in projects, is every thing. What an admirable fellow did I think myself till now! Even for this scheme among the rest! But how pitifully foolish does it appear to me now! — Scratch out, erafe, never to be read, every part of my preceding letters, where I have boastingly mentioned it.—And never presume to railly me upon the cursed subject: For I cannot bear it.

But for the lady, by my soul I love her, I admire her, more than ever! —I must have her. I will have her still. --- *With honour, or without*, as I have often vowed. --- My cursed fright at her accidental bloody nose, so lately, put her upon improving upon me thus: Had she threatened ME, I should soon have been mistress of one arm, and in both! --- But for so sincere a virtue to threaten herself, and not offer to intimidate any other, and with so much presence of mind, as to distinguish, in the very passionate intention, the necessity of the act in defence of her honour, and so fairly to disavow lesser occasions; shewed such a deliberation, such a choice, such a principle; and then keeping me so watchfully at a distance, that I could not seize her hand, so soon as she could have given the fatal blow; how impossible

possible not to be subdued by so *true* and so *discreet* a magnanimity!

But she is not *gone*; shall not go. I will press her with letters for the Thursday—She shall yet be mine, legally mine. For, as to cohabitation, there is now no such thing to be thought of.

The Captain shall give her away, as proxy for her uncle. My Lord will die. My fortune will help my *will*, and set me above every-thing and every-body.

But here is the curse:—She despises me, Jack!—What man, as I have heretofore said, can bear to be despised—especially by his wife?—O Lord! O Lord! What a hand, what a cursed hand, have I made of this plot!—And here ends

The history of the Lady and the Penknife!!!—The devil take the penknife!—It goes against me to say, God bless the Lady.

Near 5, Sat. Morn.

LETTER LI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Superscribed, To Mrs. LOVELACE.

M. Hall, Sat. Night, June 24.

My dearest Life,

IF you do not impute to love, and to terror raised by love, the poor figure I made before you last night, you will not do me justice. I thought I would try to the very last moment, if, by complying with you in *every-thing*, I could prevail upon you to promise to be mine on Thursday next, since you refused me an earlier day. Could I have been so happy, you had not been hindered going to Hamstead, or wherever else you pleased. But when I could not prevail upon you to give me this assurance, what room had I (my demerit so great) to suppose, that your going thither would not be to lose you for ever?

I will own to you, Madam, that yesterday afternoon

noon I picked up the paper dropt by Dorcas ; who has confessed, that she would have assisted you in getting away, if she had had an opportunity so to do ; and undoubtedly dropped it by *accident*.—And could I have prevailed upon you as to the Thursday next, I would have made no use of it ; secure as I should then have been, in your word given, to be mine. But when I found you inflexible, I was resolved to try, if, by resenting Dorcas's treachery, I could not make *your* pardon of *me* the condition of *mine* to *her* : And if not, to make a handle of it to revoke my consent to your going away from Mrs. Sinclair's ; since the consequence of that must have been so fatal to me.

So far, indeed, was my proceeding *low* and *artful* : And when I was challenged with it, as such, in so high and noble a manner, I could not avoid taking *shame* to myself upon it.

But you must permit me, Madam, to hope, that you will not punish me too heavily for so poor a contrivance, since no dishonour was meant you ; and since, in the moment of its execution, you had as great an instance of my incapacity to defend a wrong, a low measure, and, at the same time, of your power over me, as mortal man could give : In a word, since you must have seen, that I was absolutely under the controul both of Conscience, and of Love.

I will not offer to defend myself, for *wishing you to remain where you are*, till either you give me your word to meet me at the altar, on Thursday ; or till I have the honour of attending you, preparative to the solemnity which will make that day the happiest of my life.

I am but too sensible, that this kind of treatment may appear to you with the face of an arbitrary and illegal imposition : But as the consequences, not only to ourselves, but to both our families, may be fatal, if you cannot be moved in my favour ; let me beseech you to forgive this act of compulsion, on the score of the necessity

necessity you your dear self have laid me under to be guilty of it; and to permit the solemnity of next Thursday to include an act of oblivion of all past offences.

The orders I have given to the people of the house are: ‘ That you shall be obeyed in every particular that is consistent with my expectations of finding you there on my return to town on Wednesday next: That Mrs. Sinclair, and her nieces, having incurred your just displeasure, shall not, without your orders, come into your presence: That neither shall Dorcas, till she has fully cleared her conduct to your satisfaction, be permitted to attend you: But Mabell, in her place; of whom, you seemed, some time ago, to express some liking. Will I have left behind me to attend your commands. If he be either negligent or impertinent, your dismissal shall be a dismissal of him from my service for ever. But, as to letters which may be sent you, or any which you may have to send, I must humbly intreat, that none such pass *from* or *to* you, for the few days that I shall be absent.’ But I do assure you, Madam, that the seals of both sorts shall be sacred: And the letters, if such be sent, shall be given into your own hands, the moment the ceremony is performed, or before, if you require it.

Mean time I will inquire, and send you word, how Miss Howe does; and to what, if I can be informed, her long silence is owing.

Dr. Perkins I found here, attending my Lord, when I arrived with Dr. S. He acquaints me, that your father, mother, uncles, and the still *less* worthy persons of your family, are well; and intend to be all at your uncle Harlowe’s next week; I presume to keep his anniversary. This can make no alteration, but a happy one, as to persons, on Thursday; because Mr. Tomlinson assured me, that, if

any-thing fell out to hinder your uncle's coming up in person (which, however, he did not then expect), he would be satisfied if his friend the Captain were proxy for him. I shall send a man and horse to-morrow to the Captain, to be at greater certainty.

I send this by a special messenger, who will wait your pleasure: Which I humbly hope will be signified in a line, in relation to the impatiently-wished-for Thursday.

My Lord, tho' hardly sensible, and unmindful of every-thing but of our felicity, desires his most affectionate compliments to you. He has in readiness to present you several valuables; which he hopes will be acceptable, whether he lives to see you adorn them, or not.

Lady Sarah and Lady Betty have also their tokens of respect ready to court your acceptance: But may heaven incline you to give the opportunity of receiving their personal compliments, and those of my cousins Montague, before the next week be out!

His Lordship is exceeding ill. Dr. S. has no hopes of him: The only consolation I can have for the death of a relation who loves me so well, if he do die, must arise from the additional power it will put into my hands of shewing how much I am,

*My dearest Life,
Your ever-affectionate and faithful
LOVELACE.*

LETTER LII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Superscribed, To Mrs. LOVELACE.

M. Hall, Sunday Night, June 25.

My dearest Love,

I Cannot find words to express how much I am mortified at the return of my messenger, without a line from you.

Thursday is so near, that I will send messenger after messenger every four hours, till I have a favourable answer; the one to meet the other, till its eve arrives, to know if I may venture to appear in your presence, with the hope of having my wishes answered on that day.

Your love, Madam, I neither expect, nor ask for; nor will, till my future behaviour gives you cause to think I deserve it. All I at present presume to wish, is, To have it in my power to do you all the justice I can now do you: And to your generosity will I leave it, to reward me, as I shall merit, with your affection.

At present, revolving my poor behaviour of Friday night before you, I think I should sooner choose to go to my last audit, unprepared for it as I am, than to appear in your presence, unless you give me some hope, that I shall be received as your elected husband, rather than (however deserved) as a detested criminal.

Let me therefore propose an expedient, in order to spare my own confusion; and to spare you the necessity for that soul-harrowing recrimination, which I cannot stand, and which must be disagreeable to yourself — To name the church; and I will have every thing in readiness; so that our next interview will be, in a manner, at the very altar; and then you will have the kind husband to forgive for the faults of the ingrateful lover. If your resentment be still too high to write more, let it only be, in your own dear hand, these words, St. Martin's church, Thursday—or these, St. Giles's church, Thursday; nor will I insist upon any inscription, or subscription, or so much as the initials of your name. This shall be all the favour I will expect, till the dear hand itself is given to mine, in presence of that Being whom I invoke as a witness of the inviolable faith and honour of

Your adoring

LOVELACE.

LETTER LIII.

*Mr. LOVELACE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.**Superscribed, To Mrs. LOVELACE.**M. Hall, Monday, June 26.*

ONCE more, my dearest love, do I conjure you to send me the four requested words. There is no time to be lost. And I would not have next Thursday go over, without being intitled to call you mine, for the world ; and that as well for your sake as my own. Hitherto all that has passed is between you and me only ; but, after Thursday, if my wishes are unanswered, the whole will be before the world.

My Lord is extremely ill, and endures not to have me out of his sight for one half-hour. But this shall not weigh with me one iota, if you be pleased to hold out the olive-branch to me, in the four requested words.

I have the following intelligence from Captain Tomlinson.

All your family are at your uncle Harlowe's. Your uncle finds he cannot go up ; and names Captain Tomlinson for his proxy. He proposes to keep all your family with him, till the Captain assures him, that the ceremony is over.

Already he has begun, with hope of success, to try to reconcile your mother to you.

My Lord M. but just now has told me, how happy he should think himself to have an opportunity, before he dies, to salute you as his niece. I have put him in hopes, that he shall see you ; and have told him, that I will go to town on Wednesday, in order to prevail upon you to accompany me down on Thursday or Friday. I have ordered a set to be in readiness to carry me up ; and, were not my Lord so very ill, my

my cousin Montague tells me, she would offer her attendance on you. If you please, therefore, we can set out for this place the moment the solemnity is performed.

Do not, dearest creature, dissipate all these promising appearances, and, by refusing to save your own and your family's reputation in the eye of the world, use yourself worse than the ingratefullest wretch on earth has used you. For, if we are married, all the disgrace you imagine you have suffered while a single lady, will be my own; and only known to ourselves.

Once more then, consider well the situation we are both in; and remember, my dearest life, that Thursday will be soon here; and that you have no time to lose.

In a letter sent by the messenger whom I dispatch with this, I have desired, that my friend Mr. Belford, who is your very great admirer, and who knows all the secrets of my heart, will wait upon you, to know what I am to depend upon, as to the chosen day.

Surely, my dear, you never could, at any time, suffer half so much from cruel suspense, as I do.

If I have not an answer to this, either from your own goodness, or thro' Mr. Belford's intercession, it will be too late for me to set out: And Captain Tomlinson will be disappointed, who goes to town on purpose to attend your pleasure.

One motive for the gentle restraint I have presumed to lay you under, is to prevent the mischiefs that might ensue (as probably to the *more* innocent, as to the *less*), were you to write to any-body, while your passions were so much raised and inflamed against me. Having apprised you of my direction on this head, I wonder you should have endeavoured to send a letter to Miss Howe, altho' in a cover directed

rected to that young lady's (*a*) servant; as you must think it would be likely to fall into my hands.

The just sense of what I have deserved the contents *should be*, leaves me no room to doubt what they *are*. Nevertheless, I return it you inclosed, with the seal, as you will see, unbroken.

Relieve, I beseech you, dearest Madam, by the four requested words, or by Mr. Belford, the anxiety of

Your ever-affectionate and obliged

LOVELACE.

Remember, there will not, there *cannot* be time for further writing, and for my coming-up by Thursday, *your uncle's birth-day*.

LETTER LIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Monday, June 26.

THOU wilt see the situation I am in with Miss Harlowe by the inclosed copies of three letters; to two of which I am too much scorned to have one word given me in answer; and of the third (now sent by the messenger who brings thee this) I am afraid as little notice will be taken — And if so, her day of grace is absolutely over.

One would imagine (so long used to constraint too as she has been), that she might have been satisfied with the triumph she had over us all on Friday night: A triumph that to this hour has sunk my pride and my vanity so much, that I almost hate the words *Plot, Contrivance, Scheme*, and shall mistrust myself in future, for every one that rises to my inventive head.

But seest thou not, that I am under a necessity to continue her at Sinclair's, and to prohibit all her correspondences?

Now,

(*a*) *The lady had made an attempt to send away a letter.*

Now, Belford, as I really, in my present mood, think of nothing less than marrying her, if she let not Thursday slip; I would have thee, in pursuance of the intimation I have given her in my letter of this date, to attend her; and vow for me, swear for me, bind thy soul to her for my honour, and use what arguments thy friendly heart can suggest, in order to procure me an answer from her; which, as thou wilt see, she may give in four words only. And then I purpose to leave Lord M. (dangerously ill as he is) and meet her at her appointed church, in order to solemnize: If she will sign but *Cl. H.* to *thy* writing the four words, that shall do; for I would not come up to be made a fool of in the face of all my family and friends.

If she should let the day go off;—I shall be desperate!—I am intangled in my own devices, and cannot bear that she should detect me.

O that I had been honest!—What a devil are all my plots come to! What do they end in, but one grand plot upon myself, and a title to eternal infamy and disgrace! But, depending on thy friendly offices, I will say no more of this.—Let her send me but one line!—But one line!—Not treat me as *unworthy* of her notice; yet be altogether in my power—I cannot—I will not bear that.

My Lord, as I said, is extremely ill: The doctors give him over. He gives himself over. Those who would not have him die, are afraid he will. But as to myself, I am doubtful: For these long and violent struggles between the constitution and the disease, tho' the latter has three physicians and an apothecary to help it forward (and all three, as to their prescriptions, of different opinions too), indicate a plaguy tough habit, and favour more of recovery than death: And the more so, as he has no sharp or acute animal organs to whet out his bodily ones, and to raise his fever above the symptomatic helpful one.

Thou

Thou wilt see in the inclosed, what pains I am at to dispatch messengers; who are constantly on the road to meet each other, and one of them to link in the chain with a fourth, whose station is in London, and five miles onward, or till met. But, in truth, I have some other matters for them to perform at the same time, with my Lord's banker and his lawyer; which will enable me, if his Lordship is so good as to die this bout, to be an over-match for some of my other relations. I don't mean Charlotte and Patty; for they are noble girls; but others, who have been scratching and clawing under-ground like so many moles in my absence; and whose workings I have discovered since I have been down, by the little heaps of dirt they have thrown up.

A speedy account of thy commission, dear Jack!
The letter travels all night.

LETTER LV.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

London, June 27. Tuesday.

YOU must excuse me, Lovelace, from engaging in the office you would have me undertake, till I can be better assured you really intend honourably at last by this much-injured lady.

I believe you know your friend Belford too well, to think he would be easy with you, or with any man alive, who should seek to make him promise for him what he never intended to perform. And let me tell thee, that I have not much confidence in the honour of a man, who, by *imitation of hands* (I will only call it), has shewn so little regard to the honour of his own relations.

Only that thou hast such jesuitical qualifyings, or I should think thee at last touched with remorse, and brought within view of being ashamed of thy cursed inventions

inventions by the ill success of thy last : Which I heartily congratulate thee upon.

O the divine lady !—But I will not aggravate !

Yet when thou writest, that, in thy *present mood*, thou thinkest of marrying ; and yet canst so *easily* change thy *mood* : When I know thy heart is against the state :—That the four words thou courtest from the lady are as much to thy purpose, as if she wrote forty ; since it will shew she can forgive the highest injury that can be offered to woman : And when I recollect, how easily thou canst find excuses to postpone ; thou must be more explicit a good deal, as to thy real intentions, and future honour, than thou art ; for I cannot trust to a temporary remorse ; which is brought on by disappointment too, and not by principle ; and the like of which thou hast so often got over !

If thou canst convince me time enough for the day, that thou meanest to do honourably by her, in *her own* sense of the word ; or, if not time enough, wilt fix some other day (which thou oughtest to leave to her option, and not bind her down for the Thursday ; and the rather, as thy pretence for so doing is founded on an absolute fiction) ; I will then most chearfully undertake thy cause ; by *person*, if she will admit me to her presence ; if not, by *pen*. But, in this case, thou must allow me to be guarantee for thy faith. And, if so, as much as I value thee, and respect thy skill in all the qualifications of a gentleman, thou may'st depend upon it, that I will act up to the character of a guarantee, with more honour than the princes of our day usually do—to their shame be it spoken.

Mean time, let me tell thee, that my heart bleeds for the wrongs this angelic lady has received : And if thou dost *not* marry her, if she will *have* thee ; and, when married, make her the best and tenderest of husbands ;

husbands ; I would rather be a dog, a monkey, a bear, a viper, or a toad, than thee.

Command me with honour, and thou shalt find none readier to oblige thee, than

Thy sincere Friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

LETTER LVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

M. Hall, June 27. Tuesday Night, near 12.

YOURS reached me this moment, by an extraordinary push in the messengers.

What a man of honour, thou, of a sudden !

And so, in the imaginary shape of a guarantee, thou threatenest me !

Had I *not* been in earnest as to the lady, I should not have offered to employ thee in the affair. But, let me tell thee, that *hadst* thou undertaken the task, and I had afterwards thought fit to change my mind, I should have contented myself to tell thee, that That *was* my mind, when thou engagedst for me ; and to have given thee the reasons for the change ; and then left thee to thy own direction. For never knew I what fear of man was,—nor fear of woman neither, till I became acquainted with Miss Clarissa Harlowe ; nay, what is *most* surprising, till I came to have her in my power.

And so thou wilt not wait upon the charmer of my heart, but upon terms and conditions!—Let it alone, and be curs'd ; I care not. — But so much credit did I give to the value thou expressedst for her, that I thought the office would have been as acceptable to *thee*, as serviceable to me ; for what was it, but to endeavour to persuade her to consent to the reparation of her own honour ? For what have I done but

obliged

but disgraced myself, and been a thief to my own joys? — And if there be an union of hearts, and an intention to solemnize, what is there wanting but the foolish ceremony? — And that I still offer. But if she will keep back her hand; if she will make me hold out mine in vain—How can I help it?

I write her one more letter, and if, after she has received that, she keep sullen silence, she must thank herself for what is to follow.

But, after all, my heart is wholly hers. I love her beyond expression; and cannot help it. I hope therefore she will receive this last tender, as I wish. I hope she intends not, like a true woman, to plague, and vex, and tease me, now she has found her power. If she will take me to mercy now these remorses are upon me; tho' I scorn to condition with *thee* for my sincerity; all her trials, as I have heretofore declared, shall be over; and she shall be as happy as I can make her: For, ruminating upon all that has passed between us, from the first hour of our acquaintance till the present, I must pronounce, That she is Virtue itself, and, once more I say, has no equal.

As to what you hint of leaving to her choice another day, do you consider, that it will be impossible, that my contrivances and stratagems should be much longer concealed? — This makes me press *that* day, tho' so near; and the more, as I have made so much ado about her uncle's anniversary. If she send me the *four words*, I will spare no fatigue to be in time, if not for the canonical hour at church, for some other hour of the day in her own apartment, or any other; for money will do every thing: And *that* I have never spared in this affair.

To shew thee, that I am not at enmity with thee, I inclose the copies of two letters: One to her: It is the *fourth*, and *must* be the *last* on the subject: The other to Captain Tomlinson; calculated, as thou wilt see, for him to shew her.

And

And now, Jack, interfere in this case, or not,
thou knowest the mind of

R. LOVELACE.

LETTER LVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Superscribed, To Mrs. LOVELACE.

M. Hall, Wed. Morn. One o'Clock, June 28.

NOT one line, my dearest life, not one word, in answer to three letters I have written! The time is now so short, that this *must* be the last letter that can reach you on this side of the important hour that might make us legally one.

My friend Mr. Belford is apprehensive, that he cannot wait upon you in time, by reason of some urgent affairs of his own.

I the less regret the disappointment, because I have procured a *more* acceptable person, as I hope, to attend you; Captain Tomlinson I mean: To whom I had applied for this purpose, before I had Mr. Belford's answer.

I was the more solicitous to obtain this favour from him, because of the office he is to take upon him, as I humbly presume to hope, to-morrow. That office obliged him to be in town as this day: And I acquainted him with my unhappy situation with you; and desired, that he would shew me, on this occasion, that I had as much of his favour and friendship, as your uncle had; since the whole treaty must be broken off, if he could not prevail upon you in my behalf.

He will dispatch the messenger directly; whom I propose to meet in person at Slough; either to proceed onward to London with a joyful heart, or to return back to M. Hall, with a broken one.

I ought not (but cannot help it) to anticipate the pleasure Mr. Tomlinson proposes to himself, in acquainting

quainting you with the likelihood there is of your mother's seconding your uncle's views. For, it seems, he has privately communicated to her his laudable intentions: And *her* resolution depends, as well as *his*, upon what to-morrow will produce.

Disappoint not then, I beseech you, for an hundred persons sakes, as well as for mine, *that* uncle, and *that* mother, whose displeasure I have heard you so often deplore.

You may think it impossible for me to reach London by the canonical hour. If it should, the ceremony may be performed in your own apartment, at any time in the day, or at night: So that Captain Tomlinson may have it to aver to your uncle, that it was performed on his anniversary.

Tell but the Captain, that you *forbid me not* to attend you: And that shall be sufficient for bringing to you, on the wings of Love,

*Your ever-grateful and affectionate
LOVELACE.*

LETTER LVIII.

To Mr. PATRICK M'DONALD, at his Lodgings, at Mr. Brown's, Perukemaker, in St. Martin's-lane, Westminster.

M. Hall, Wedn. morning, two o'clock, June 28.

Dear M'DONALD,

THE bearer of this has a letter to carry to the lady (*a*). I have been at the trouble of writing a copy of it; which I inclose, that you may not mistake your cue.

You will judge of my reasons for ante-dating the inclosed sealed one (*b*), directed to you by the name of Tomlinson, which you are to shew the lady, as in confidence. You will open it of course.

(*a*) *Viz.* the preceding letter. (*b*) See the next letter.

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R

I doubt

I doubt not your dexterity and management, dear M'Donald; nor your zeal, especially as the hope of cohabitation must now be given up. Impossible to be carried is that scheme. I might break her heart, but not incline her will. Am in earnest therefore to marry her, if she let not the day slip.

Improve upon the hint of her mother: That must touch her. But John Harlowe, *remember*, has privately engaged that Lady—*Privately*, I say; else (not to mention the reason for her uncle Harlowe's former expedient) you know, she might find means to get a letter away to the one or the other, to know the truth; or to Miss Howe, to engage her to inquire into it: And if she should, the word *privately* will account for the uncle's and mother's denying it.

However, fail not, as from me, to charge our mother and her nymphs, to redouble their vigilance both as to her person and letters. All's upon a crisis now. But she must not be treated ill neither.

Thursday over, I shall know what to resolve upon.

If necessary, you must assume authority. The devil's in't, if such a girl as this shall awe a man of your years and experience. Fly out, if she doubt your honour. Spirits *naturally* soft may be beat out of their play and borne down (tho' ever so much raised) by higher anger. All women are cowards at bottom: Only violent when they *may*. I have often stormed a girl out of her mistrusts, and made her yield before she knew where she was to the point indignantly *mistrusted*; and that to make up with me, tho' I was the aggressor.

If this matter succeed as I'd have it (or if *not*, and do not fail by your fault) I will take you off of the necessity of pursuing your cursed Smuggling; which otherwise may one day end fatally for you.

We are none of us perfect, M'Donald. This sweet lady makes me serious sometimes in spite of my heart.

heart. But as private vices are less blameable than public; and as I think *Smuggling* (as it is called) a National evil; I have no doubt to pronounce you a much worse man than myself, and as such shall take pleasure in reforming you.

I send you inclosed ten guineas, as a small earnest of further favours. Hitherto you have been a very clever fellow.

As to cloaths for Thursday, Monmouth-street will afford a ready supply. Cloaths quite new would make your condition suspected. But you may defer that care, till you see if she can be prevailed upon. Your riding-dress will do for the first visit. Nor let your boots be over clean: I have always told you the consequence of attending to the *minutiae*, where art (or *imposture*, as the ill-manner'd would call it) is designed—Your linen rumpled and soily, when you wait upon her—Easy terms these! — Just come to town—Remember (as formerly) to loll, to throw out your legs, to stroke and grasp down your ruffles, as if of significance enough to be careless. What tho' the presence of a fine lady would require a different behaviour, are you not of years to dispense with politeness? You have no design upon her, you know. Are a father yourself of daughters as old as she. Evermore is *parade* and *obsequiousness* suspectable: It must shew either a foolish head, or a knavish heart. Make yourself of *consequence* therefore; and you will be treated as a *man* of consequence. I have often more than half ruined myself by my complaisance, and, being afraid of controul, have brought controul upon myself.

I think I have no more to say at present. I intend to be at Slough, or on the way to it, as by mine to the lady. Adieu, honest McDonald.

R. L.

LETTER LIX.

To Captain ANTONY TOMLINSON.

[*Inclosed in the preceding ; To be shewn to the Lady as in confidence.]*

M. Hall, Tuesday morn. June 27.

Dear Capt. Tomlinson,

AN unhappy misunderstanding having arisen between the dearest lady in the world and me (the particulars of which she perhaps may give you, but I will not, because I might be thought partial to myself); and she refusing to answer my most pressing and respectful letters; I am at a most perplexing uncertainty, whether she will meet us, or not, next Thursday, to solemnize.

My Lord is so extremely ill, that if I thought she would not oblige me, I would defer going up to town for two or three days. He cares not to have me out of his sight : Yet is impatient to salute my Beloved as his niece before he dies. This I have promised to give him an opportunity to do ; intending, if the dear creature will make me happy, to set out with her for this place directly from church.

With regret I speak it of the charmer of my soul ; but irreconcileableness is her family-fault : The less excusable indeed in *her*, as she herself suffers by it in so high a degree from her own relations.

Now, Sir, as you intended to be in town some time before Thursday, if it be not too great an inconvenience to you, I could be glad you would go up as soon as possible, for my sake : And this I the more boldly request, as I presume that a man who has so many great affairs of his own in hand as you have, would be glad to be at a certainty himself as to the day.

You, Sir, can so pathetically and justly set before me the unhappy consequences that will follow if the

day be postponed, as well with regard to her uncle's disappointment, as to the part you have assured me her mother is willing to take in the wished-for reconciliation, that I have great hopes she will suffer herself to be prevailed upon. And a man and horse shall be in waiting to take your dispatches, and bring them to me.

But if you cannot prevail in my favour, you will be pleased to satisfy your friend Mr. John Harlowe, that it is not my fault that he is not obliged. I am, dear Sir,

*Your extremely obliged
and faithful Servant,*

R. LOVELACE.

LETTER LX.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Wedn. June 28. near 12 o'clock.

Honoured Sir,

I Received yours, as your servant desired me to acquaint you, by ten this morning. Horse and man were in a foam.

I instantly equipp'd myself, as if come off from a journey, and posted away to the lady, intending to plead great affairs, that I came not before, in order to favour your *ante-date*; and likewise to be in a hurry, to have a pretence to *hurry her Ladyship*, and to take no denial for her giving a *satisfactory* return to your messenger: But, upon my entering Mrs. Sinclair's house, I found all in the greatest consternation.

You must not, Sir, be surprised. It is a trouble to me to be the relater of the bad news: But so it is, the lady is gone off. She was missed but half an hour before I came.

Her waiting-maid is run away, or hitherto is not to be found: So that they conclude it was by her connivance.

They had sent before I came to my honoured masters Mr. Belton, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Belford. Mr. Tourville is out of town.

High words are passing between Madam Sinclair, and Madam Horton, and Madam Martin; as also with Dorcas. And your servant William threatens to hang or drown himself.

They have sent to know if they can hear of Mabell the waiting-maid at her mother's, who it seems lives in Chick-lane, West-Smithfield; and to an uncle of her's also, who keeps an alehouse at Cowcros, hard-by, and with whom she lived last.

Your messenger, having just changed his horse, is come back: So I will not detain him longer than to add, that I am, with great concern for this misfortune, and thanks for your seasonable favour and kind intentions towards me [I am sure this was not my fault] honoured Sir,

Your most obliged humble Servant,

PATRICK McDONALD.

LETTER LXI.

Mr. MOWBRAY, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Dear Lovelace,

Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

I Have plaguy news to acquaint thee with. Miss Harlowe is gon off!—Quite gon, by my soul!—I have not time for particulars, your servant being going off. But iff I had, we are not yet come to the bottom of the matter. The ladies here are all blubbering like devils, accusing one another most confoundedly: Whilst Belton and I damn them all together in thy name.

If thou shouldst hear that thy fellow Will. is taken dead out of some horse-pond, and Dorcas cutt down from her bed's, teaster, from dangling in her own garters, be not surpriz'd. Here's the devill to pay. No-body serene but Jack Belford, who is taking minnutes

minnutes of examminations, accusations, and confessions, with the significant air of a Middlesex Justice ; and intends to write at large all particulars, I suppose.

I heartily condole with thee : So does Belton. But it may turn out for the best : For she is gone away with thy marks, I understand. A foolish little devill ! Where will she mend herself ? For no-body will look upon her. And they tell me, that thou wouldest certainly have married her had she staid.—But I know thee better.

Dear Bobby, adieu. If thy uncle will die now, to comfort thee for this losf, what a *seasonable* exit would he make ! Let's have a letter from thee : Pr'ythee do. Thou canst write devil-like to Belford, who shews us nothing at all.

Thine heartily,

RD. MOWBRAY.

LETTER LXII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Thursday, June 29.

THOU hast heard from McDonald and Mowbray the news. Bad or good, I know not which thou'l deem it. I only wish I could have given thee joy upon the same account, before the unhappy lady was seduced from Hamstead : For then of what an ingrateful villainy hadst thou been spared the perpetration, which now thou hast to answer for !

I came to town purely to serve thee with her, expecting that thy next would satisfy me that I might endeavour it without dishonour : And at first when I found her gone, I half pitied thee ; for now wilt thou be inevitably blown up : And in what an execrable light wilt thou appear to all the world ! Poor Lovelace ! Caught in thy own snares ! Thy punishment is but beginning !

But to my narrative ; for I suppose thou expectest all particulars from me, since Mowbray has informed thee that I have been collecting them.

‘ The noble exertion of spirit she had made on Friday night, had, it seems, greatly disordered her ; insomuch that she was not visible till Saturday evening ; when Mabell saw her, and she seemed to be very ill : But on Sunday morning, having dress'd herself, as if designing to go to church, she order'd Mabell to get her a coach to the door.

‘ The wench told her, She was to obey her in every thing but the calling of a coach or chair.

‘ She sent for Will, and gave him the same command.

‘ He pleaded his master's orders to the contrary, and desired to be excused.

‘ Upon this, down she went herself, and would have gone out without observation : But finding the street-door double-lock'd, and the key not in the lock, she stept into the street-parlour, and would have thrown up the sash to call out to the people passing by, as they doubted not : But that, since her last attempt of the same nature, had been fasten'd down.

‘ Hereupon she resolutely stept into Mrs. Sinclair's parlour in the back-house ; where were the old devil and her two partners ; and demanded the key of the street-door, or to have it opened for her.

‘ They were all surprised ; but desired to be excused, pleading your orders.

‘ She asserted, that you had no authority over her ; and never should have any : That their present refusal was their own act and deed : She saw the intent of their back-house, and the reason of putting her there : She pleaded her condition and fortune ; and said, They had no way to avoid utter ruin, but by opening their doors to her, or by murdering her,

her, and burying her in their garden or cellar, too deep for detection : That already what had been done to her was punishable by death : And bid them at their peril detain her.

What a noble, what a right spirit has this charming creature, in cases that will justify an exertion of spirit ! —

They answer'd, That Mr. Lovelace could prove his marriage, and would indemnify them. And they all would have vindicated their behaviour on Friday night, and the reputation of their house : But refusing to hear them on that topic, she flung from them, threatening.

She then went up half a dozen stairs in her way to her own apartment : But, as if she had bethought herself, down she stept again, and proceeded towards the street-parlour ; saying, as she passed by the infamous Dorcas, I'll make myself protectors, tho' the windows suffer : But that wench, of her own head, on the lady's going out of that parlour to Mrs. Sinclair's, had lock'd the door, and taken out the key : So that finding herself disappointed, she burst into tears, and went menacing and sobbing up stairs again.

She made no other attempt till the effectual one. Your letters and messages, they supposed, coming so fast upon one another (tho' she would not answer one of them) gave her some amusement, and an assurance to them, that she would at last forgive you ; and that then all would end as you wish'd.

The women, in pursuance of your orders, offer'd not to obtrude themselves upon her ; and Dorcas also kept out of her sight all the rest of Sunday ; also on Monday and Tuesday. But by the lady's condescension (even to familiarity) to Mabell, they imagined, that she must be working in her mind all that time to get away : They therefore redoubled their cautions to the wench : Who told

' them so faithfully all that passed between her lady
' and her, that they had no doubt of her fidelity to
' her wicked trust.

' 'Tis probable she might have been contriving
something all this time ; but saw no room for per-
fecting any scheme : The contrivance by which
she effected her escape seems to me not to have
been fallen upon till the very day ; since it depended
partly upon the *weather*, as it proved. But it is
evident she hoped something from Mabell's sim-
plicity, or gratitude, or compassion, by cultivating
all the time her civility to her.

' Polly waited on her early on Wednesday morn-
ing ; and met with a better reception than she had
reason to expect. She complained however with
warmth of her confinement. Polly said, There
would be an happy end to it (if it were a confine-
ment) next day, she presumed. She absolutely
declared to the contrary, in the way Polly meant it ;
and said, That Mr. Lovelace, on his return [*Which*
look'd as if she intended to wait for it], should have
reason to repent the orders he had given, as *they*
all should their observance of them : Let him send
twenty letters, she would not answser one, be the
consequence what it would ; nor give him hope of
the least favour, while she was in that house. She
had given Mrs. Sinclair and themselves fair warn-
ing, she said : No orders of another ought to make
them detain a free person : But having made an
open attempt to go, and been detained by them,
she was the calmer, she told Polly ; Let *them* look
to the consequence.

' But yet she spoke this with temper ; and Polly
gave it as her opinion, (with apprehension for their
own safety) that, having so good a handle to punish
them all, she would not go away, if she might.
And what, inferred Polly, is the indemnity of a
man who has committed the vilest of rapes on a
person

person of condition ; and must himself, if prosecuted for it, either fly, or be hang'd ?

‘ Sinclair, so I will still call her, upon this representation of Polly, foresaw, she said, *the ruin of her poor house* in the issue of this *strange* business, as she call'd it ; and Sally and Dorcas bore their parts in the apprehension : And this put them upon thinking it adviseable for the future, that the street-door should generally in the day-time be only left upon a bolt-latch, as they call'd it, which any-body might open on the inside ; and that the key should be kept in the door ; that their numerous *comers and goers*, as they called their guests, should be able to give evidence, that she might have gone out if she would : Not forgetting, however, to renew their orders to Will. to Dorcas, to Mabell, and the rest, to redouble their vigilance on this occasion, to prevent her escape : — None of them doubting, at the same time, that her love of a man so considerable in *their* eyes, and the prospect of what was to happen as she had reason to believe on Thursday, her uncle's birth-day, would (tho' perhaps not till the last hour, for her *pride-sake*, was their word) engage her to change her temper.

‘ They believe, that she discover'd the key to be left in the door ; for she was down more than once to walk in the little garden, and seemed to cast her eye each time to the street-door.

‘ About eight yesterday morning, an hour after Polly had left her, she told Mabell, She was sure she should not live long ; and having a good many suits of apparel, which after her death would be of no use to any-body she valued, she would give her a brown lustring gown, which, with some alterations, to make it more suitable to her degree, would a great while serve her for a Sunday wear ; for that she (Mabell) was the only person in that

‘ house of whom she could think without terror or
‘ antipathy.

‘ Mabell expressing her gratitude upon the occasion,
‘ the lady said, She had nothing to employ herself
‘ about; and if she could get a workwoman directly,
‘ she would look over her things then, and give her
‘ what she intended for her.

‘ Her mistress’s mantua-maker, the maid replied,
‘ lived but a little way off; and she doubted not that
‘ she could procure *her*, or one of her journey-
‘ women, to alter the gown out of hand.

‘ I will give you also, said she, a quilted coat,
‘ which will require but little alteration, if any; for you
‘ are much about my stature: But the gown I will
‘ give directions about, because the sleeves and the
‘ robings and facings must be alter’d for your wear,
‘ being, I believe, above your station: And try,
‘ said she, if you can get the workwoman, and we’ll
‘ advise about it. If she cannot come now, let her
‘ come in the afternoon; but I had rather now, be-
‘ cause it will amuse me to give you a lift.

‘ Then stepping to the window, It rains, said she
‘ [and so it had done all the morning]: Slip on the
‘ hood and short cloak I have seen you wear, and
‘ come to me when you are ready to go out, because
‘ you shall bring me in something that I want.

‘ Mabell equipp’d herself accordingly, and received
‘ her commands to buy her some trifles, and then
‘ left her; but, in her way out, stept into the back
‘ parlour, where Dorcas was with Mrs. Sinclair, telling
‘ her where she was going, and on what account,
‘ bidding Dorcas look out till she came back. So
‘ faithful was the wench to the trust reposed in her,
‘ and so little had the lady’s generosity wrought upon
‘ her.

‘ Mrs. Sinclair commended her; Dorcas envied
‘ her, and took her cue: And Mabell soon returned
‘ with the mantua-maker’s journeywoman (She was
‘ resolved

‘ resolved, she said, she would not come without her);
‘ and then Dorcas went off guard.

‘ The lady look’d out the gown and petticoat,
‘ and before the workwoman caused Mabell to try
‘ it on; and, that it might fit the better, made the
‘ willing wench pull off her upper petticoat, and put
‘ on that she gave her. Then she bid them go in-
‘ to Mr. Lovelace’s apartment, and contrive about it
‘ before the pier-glass there, and stay till she came to
‘ them, to give them her opinion.

‘ Mabell would have taken her own cloaths, and
‘ hood, and short cloak with her: But her lady said,
‘ No matter; you may put them on again here,
‘ when we have consider’d about the alterations:
‘ There’s no occasion to litter the other room.

‘ They went; and instantly, as it is supposed, she
‘ slipt on Mabell’s gown and petticoat over her own,
‘ which was white damask, and put on the wench’s
‘ hood, short cloak, and ordinary apron, and down
‘ she went.

‘ Hearing somebody tripping along the passage,
‘ both Will. and Dorcas whipt to the inner-hall door,
‘ and saw her; but, taking her for Mabell, Are you
‘ going far, Mabell, cried Will.?

‘ Without turning her face, or answering, she
‘ held out her hand, pointing to the stairs; which
‘ they construed as a caution for them to look out in
‘ her absence; and supposing she would not be long
‘ gone, as she had not formally repeated her caution
‘ to them, up went Will. tarrying at the stairs-head
‘ in expectation of the supposed Mabell’s return.

‘ Mabell and the workwoman waited a good while,
‘ amusing themselves not disagreeably, the one with
‘ contriving in the way of her business, the other
‘ delighting herself with her fine gown and coat:
‘ But at last, wondering the lady did not come in to
‘ them, Mabell tiptoed it to her door, and tapping,
‘ and not being answer’d, stept into the chamber.

‘ Will.

‘ Will. at that instant, from his station at the stairs-head, seeing Mabell in her *lady's* cloaths ; for he had been told of the present [Gifts to servants fly from servant to servant in a minute] was very much surprised, having, as he thought, just seen her go out in *her own* ; and, stepping up, met her at the door. How the devil can this be, said he ? Just now you went out in your own dress ! How came you here in This ? And how could you pass me unseen ? But nevertheless, kissing her, said, He would now brag he had kissed his lady, or one in her cloaths.

‘ I am glad, Mr. William, cried Mabell, to see you here so diligently. But know you where my lady is ?

‘ In my master's apartment, i'nt she ? interrogated Will. Was she not talking with you this moment ?

‘ No, that's Mrs. Dolins's journeywoman.

‘ They both stood aghast, as they said ; Will. again recollecting he had seen Mabell, as he thought, go out in her own cloaths. And while they were debating and wondering, up comes Dorcas with your fourth letter, just then brought for her lady ; and seeing Mabell dress'd out (whom she had likewise beheld a little before, as she supposed, in her common cloaths), she joined in the wonder ; till Mabell, re-entering the lady's apartment, missed her own cloaths ; and then suspecting what had happen'd, and letting the others into the ground of her suspicion, they all agreed, that she had certainly escaped : And then followed such an uproar of mutual accusation, and *You should have done this*, and *You should have done that*, as alarmed the whole house ; every apartment in both houses giving up its devil, to the number of fourteen or fifteen, including the mother and her partners.

‘ Will. told them his story ; and then ran out, as

‘ on

‘ on the like occasion formerly, to make inquiry
‘ whether the lady was seen by any of the coach-
men, chairmen, or porters, plying in that neigh-
bourhood : While Dorcas cleared herself imme-
diately, and that at the poor Mabell’s expence,
‘ who made a figure as guilty as aukward, having on
the suspected price of her treachery ; which Dor-
cas, out of envy, was ready to tear from her back.

‘ Hereupon all the pack open’d at the poor wench,
‘ while the mother, foaming at the mouth, bellow’d
‘ out her orders for seising the suspected offender ; who
‘ could neither be heard in her own defence, nor,
‘ had she been heard, would have been believed.

‘ That such a perfidious wretch should ever dis-
grace her house, was the mother’s cry ! Good peo-
ple might be corrupted ; but it was a fine thing if
such a house as hers could not be faithfully served
by cursed creatures, who hired themselves upon
character, and had no pretence to *principle* ! — Damn
her, the wretch proceeded ! — She had no patience
with her ! Call the cook, and call the scullion !

‘ They were at hand.

‘ See that guilty pyeball devil, was her word [her
lady’s gown upon her back] — But I’ll punish her for
a warning to all betrayers of their trust. Put on
the great gridiron this moment (an oath or a curse
at every word) : Make up a roaring fire : — The
cleaver bring me this instant : — I’ll cut her into
quarters with my own hands ; and carbonade and
broil the traitress, for a feast to all the dogs and
cats in the neighbourhood ; and eat the first slice of
the toad myself, without salt or pepper.

‘ The poor Mabell, frighten’d out of her wits,
expected every moment to be torn in pieces,
having half a score open-claw’d paws upon her all at
once. She promised to confess all : But that All,
when she had obtained a hearing, was nothing ; for
nothing had she to confess.

‘ Sally

‘ Sally hereupon, with a *curse of mercy*, ordered
 ‘ her to retire ; undertaking that she and Polly
 ‘ would examine her themselves, that they might be
 ‘ able to write all particulars to *his Honour* ; and
 ‘ then, if she could not clear herself, or, if guilty,
 ‘ give some account of the lady (who had been so
 ‘ wicked as to give them all this trouble) so as they
 ‘ might get her again, then the cleaver and gridiron
 ‘ might go to work with all their hearts.

‘ The wench, glad of this reprieve, went up stairs ;
 ‘ and while Sally was laying out the law, and prating
 ‘ away in her usual dictatorial manner, whipt on an-
 ‘ other gown, and sliding down stairs, escaped to
 ‘ her relations. And this flight, which was certainly
 ‘ more owing to *terror* than *guilt*, was, in the true
 ‘ Old Bailey construction, made a confirmation of
 ‘ the latter.’

These are the particulars of Miss Harlowe’s flight. Thou’lt hardly think me too minute.—How I long to triumph over thy impatience and fury on the occasion !

Let me beseech thee, my dear Lovelace, in thy next letter, to rave most gloriously !—I shall be grievously disappointed, if thou dost not.

Where, Lovelace, can the poor lady be gone ? And who can describe the distress she must be in ?

By your former letters, it may be supposed, that she can have very little money : Nor, by the suddenness of her flight, more cloaths than those she has on. And thou knowest who once said (*a*), “ Her
 “ Parents will not receive her : Her Uncles will
 “ not entertain her : Her Norton is in their direction,
 “ and cannot : Miss Howe dare not : She has not
 “ one friend or intimate in town ; intirely a stranger
 “ to it.” And, let me add, has been despoiled of
 tier honour by the man for whom she made all these
 sacrifices ;

(a) Vol. iv. p. 17.

sacrifices ; and who stood bound to her by a thousand oaths and vows, to be her husband, her protector, and friend !

How strong must be her resentment of the barbarous treatment she has received ! How worthy of herself, that it has made her *hate* the man she once *loved* ! And, rather than marry him, choose to expose her disgrace to the whole world ; to forego the reconciliation with her friends which her heart was so set upon ; and to hazard a thousand evils to which her youth and her sex may too probably expose an indigent and friendless beauty.

Remembereft thou not that home push upon thee, in one of the papers written in her delirium ; of which however it favours not ?—

I will assure thee, that I have very often since most seriously reflected upon it : And as thy intended second outrage convinces me, that it made no impression upon thee then, and perhaps thou hast never thought of it since, I will transcribe the sentence.

“ If, as Religion teaches us, God will judge us,
“ in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil
“ actions to one another—O wretch, bethink thee,
“ in time bethink thee, how great must be thy con-
“ demnation (a) ! ”

And is this amiable doctrine the Sum of Religion ? Upon my faith I believe it is. For, to indulge a serious thought, since we are not atheists, except in *practice*, Does God, the BEING of beings, want any thing of us for HIMSELF ? And does he not injoin us works of mercy to one another, as the means to obtain *His* mercy ? A sublime principle, and worthy of the SUPREME SUPERINTENDENT and FATHER of all things !—But, if we are to be judged by this noble principle, what, indeed, must be thy condemnation on the score of this lady only ! And what mine, and what all our confraternity’s, on the score

of

(a) See p. 237. of this Volume.

of other women ; tho' we are none of us half so bad as thou art, as well for want of inclination, I hope, as of opportunity !

I must add, that, as well for thy *own* sake, as for the *lady's*, I wish ye were yet to be married to each other. It is the only medium that can be hit upon, to salve the honour of both. All that's past may yet be concealed from the world, and from her relations ; and thou mayst make amends for all her sufferings, if thou resolvest to be a tender and kind husband to her.

And if this really be thy intention, I will accept, with pleasure, of a commission from thee, that shall tend to promote so good an end, whenever she can be found ; that is to say, if she will admit to her presence a man who professes friendship to thee. Nor can I give a greater demonstration, that I am

Thy sincere Friend,

J. BELFORD.

*P. S. Mabell's cloaths were thrown into the passage
this morning : No-body knows by whom.*

4 AP 54

END of VOL. V.



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